

# **Philosophical Significance of *Tattvamasi*: A Critical Study**

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For the award of Doctor of Philosophy  
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### DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled, Philosophical Significance of *Tattvamasi*: A Critical Study has been prepared by me under the supervision of Prof. Raghunath Ghosh, Retired Professor of Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal. I also declare that no part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I certify that Sm. Banani Barman has prepared the thesis entitled: *Philosophical Significance of Tattvamasi: A Critical Study* for the award of PhD degree of the University of North Bengal under my guidance. He has carried out the work at the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal.

  
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The present work entitled “Philosophical Significance of *Tattvamasi*: A Critical Study” is a sincere and humble attempt to bring out the significance of the *Vedic mahāvākya*, *Tattvamasi*. Though we mainly stress upon *Advaitic* interpretation but never limit our view, only in *Advaita* rather we cast our glance *Dvaitavedantins*’ interpretation too. Śaṅkara and his followers argued that “*jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ*”. The apparent difference, which has beginningless nescience for its root cause and is eradicated through ‘True knowledge’. According to Śaṅkara true knowledge is attainable through the realization of the purport of the *mahāvākya*, *Tattvamasi*. The *Advaitins* claim that *Tattvamasi* indicates *jīva-Brahman identity*. However, Rāmānuja and others have shown their deviations and departures from that of identity theory. No doubt, *Vedāntadarśana* is a flowing water. The various derivations, interpretations of the *Tattvamasi* prove it.

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## **PREFACE**

*Mahāvākyas* present in most succinct and certain terms the legacy of the *Upanisadic* view of human life, of universe, of the nature of Ultimate Reality, of the goal of life and the way to the goal. *Prajñānaṁ Brahman* and other *mahāvākyas* teach the self-knowledge is a gradual realization of our inmost self. By knowing our inmost self we realize the great Self of all beings. In addition, the great quest for this Supreme Self is inward journey. *Mahāvākyas* proclaim that the identity of the individual self and the all-pervading Supreme Self. The implied meaning of each *mahāvākya* is that the reality of all realities is none other than the non-dual all-pervading *Brahman*. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* the identity of the individual and Universal Self is established through a series of examples. *Tattvamasi* was advised nine times in section 8<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> of chapter 6<sup>th</sup> of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. It was well-known instruction about the Supreme Reality given to Śvetaketu by his father Uddālaka in ever-memorable words. Uddālaka advised in the beginning, that the modifications of things are dependent on mere words, a name only. The Supreme Self the only sat, one without a second, projecting name and form by entering first into fire, water and earth, the manifoldness of the world is mere phenomenal. Uddālaka produces nine arguments with nine analogies to establish the nature of being and individual self is essentially of the nature of *Brahman*. Each of nine arguments ends with the famous passage-“*aitādātmyamidam sarvam tat satyam sa ātmā tattvamasi śvetaketu.*”

The aim of this work is to find out the philosophical significance of *Tattvamasi*. The work composed of five chapters with an introduction and conclusion. We have taken an attempt to make the study explanatory as well as critical and we have tried our best to do justice to the previous promised.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

*Ait. Up.: Aitareya Upaniṣad*

*Br. Up.: Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*

*B. S.: Brahmasūtra*

*Ch. Up.: Chāndogya Upaniṣad*

*Ka. Up.: Katha Upaniṣad*

*Mā. Up.: Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*

*Pan. : Pañcadaśī*

*Śvet. Up.: Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*

*Tai. Up. : Taittirīya Upaniṣad*

*Vs: Vedāntasāra*

## Contents

Contents	Page No.
Abstract .....	i-iv
Preface .....	v
Abbreviation .....	vi
Introduction .....	1-13
Chapter- I.....	14-37
<b>The Legacy of <i>Vedānta Darśan</i></b>	
Section-I: Sacred <i>Veda</i>	
Section-II: The Three Pillars of <i>Vedānta</i>	
Section-III: Main features of the <i>Advaita Vedānta</i>	
a) <i>Brahma satyam</i>	
b) <i>Jagat mithyā</i>	
c) Ancient <i>Ācāryas</i> ' views on <i>jīva-Brahman</i> identity	
d) Popular views on <i>jīva-Brahman</i> identity	
Chapter-II .....	38-71
<b>Brief view on <i>Mahāvākyas</i></b>	
Section-I: What is <i>Mahāvākya</i> ?	
Section-II: Brief description about the famous four	
Section-III: Uddalaka's advice to Śvetaketu and the nine analogies	
Section-IV: The philosophical significance of the repetition	
Section-V: Canon of interpretation	
Section-VI: Is <i>Tattvamasi</i> mere an <i>arthavāda</i> ?	
Section-VII: Whether is it a kind of <i>upāsanā</i> ?	
Our observation	
Chapter- III.....	72-106
<b>Metaphysical significance of <i>Tattvamasi</i> from the <i>Advaitic</i> point of view</b>	
Section-I: <i>Vākya</i> and its types	
Section-II: <i>Akhaṇḍārtha</i> and the three relations	

- a) *Sāmānadhikaraṇyam*
- b) *Viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva*
- c) *Lakṣaṇā*

Section-III: Tradition-break interpretation of Dharmarājā Adhvarīndra

Section-IV: Metaphysical import of *Tattvamasi*

Our observation

**Chapter-IV .....107-135**

**Metaphysical Significance of *Tattvamasi* from the *Dvaita Vedāntins*' point of view**

Section-I: Rāmānujācārya's view

Section-II: Nimbārkaācārya's view

Section-III: Madvācārya's view

Section-IV: Vallabhacārya's view

Our Observation

**Chapter-V .....136-149**

**The Interpretation of *Tattvamasi* and its significance in Modern Indian Thought**

Section-I: Is *Tattvamasi* mere a conceptual thought?

Section-II: Vivekānanda's interpretation

Section-III: Schopenhauer's interpretation

Section-IV: The controversy

Our Observation

**Conclusion .....150-154**

**Bibliography .....155-161**

**Index .....162-166**



## Introduction

Human beings always remain dissatisfied with their mundane pleasures and worldly possessions. Therefore, they search for freedom from this mundane world. All who think and feel their dissatisfaction with mundane objects search for the attainment of immortality. We find many examples of these in the *Upaniṣads*. We are going to cite an example, which relate to the episode of Yājñavalkya and his wife Maitreyī.

Yājñavalkya: “Maitreyī, my dear, I am going to renounce this life. Let me make a final settlement between you and Kātyāyanī.”

Maitreyī: “Venerable sir, if indeed the whole earth, full of wealth, belonged to me, would I be immortal through that?”

Yājñavalkya: “No, your life would be just like that of people who have plenty. Of immortality however, there is no hope through wealth.”<sup>1</sup>

No doubt, this urge of Maitreyī is the inner urge of all times of all humanity, which underlies the concept of liberation. This inner urge manifests through many ways. Sometimes it stands for the attainment of heaven, sometimes stands for the stoppage of rigorous chain of rebirths, sometimes for the attainment of oneness with *Brahman*, sometimes for the cessation of all finites bondage, attachments and imperfections. Almost every *Vedānta* system attempts to define the concept of *mokṣa* along with their metaphysical principles. According to the *Advaita Vedānta*, freedom from the grip of *avidyā* constitutes the very essence of *mokṣa*. Śaṅkara claimed that the attainment of *Brahmanhood* is itself *mokṣa*. *Brahman* in the form of knowledge is of the nature of bliss or absolute happiness. It signifies the cessation of all miseries and sorrow as well as the end of all

types of bondage and transmigration. *Brahman*-knowledge can obtain through the hearing of *mahāvākya*. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahmasūtra* claimed that- “*vākyārthavicāraṇādhyavasānnirvṛttāhibrahmāvagatiḥ, na anumānādipramāṇāntarnirvṛttā.*”(1.1.2)

‘*Vākyārthavicāraṇā*’ or consideration of the meaning of statements has an important role to play in the entire scheme of the *Advaita Vedānta*. It should keep in mind that the ‘*vākyārthavicāraṇā*’ means a consideration of the *Vedāntic* statements. It is not merely the understanding of the explicit meaning of any ordinary statement. Therefore, here ‘*vākyārtha*’ means *mahāvākyārtha* and ‘*vicāra*’ means analysis or a critical study.

One may asked that according to the *Advaita Vedānta*, the *Ātman* or Self is ever manifesting itself in all its experiences i.e. walking, dreaming and deep sleep. Scripture declared that all creatures are ever free from bondage and free by nature. They are ever illuminated and always liberated.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, there is no necessity or possibility of its will be being revealed by any type of *pramāṇas* like *pratyakṣa* or *anumāna* or *śabda* (verbal testimony). According to the *Advaitins*, an individual being is always free but he does not know it due to his utter ignorance. His finitudes arise from his wrong identification with the physical body, the sense organs, mind, and the intellect. This erroneous identification with the nonself arises from ignorance. In essence, the individual being is identical with *Brahman* or *ātman* who is one, eternal, pure, transcendental consciousness. There is no ontological difference between them. Their differences due to the limiting adjuncts of body, senses, mind and intellect, which composed of empirical names and forms, are constituted by the ignorance. Pure Consciousness is the real nature of individual self. The *Vedāntic* dictum *Tattvamasi* shows it clearly. According to the *Advaitins*, the word ‘*Tat*’

means *sarvajñatvaviśiṣṭacaitanya* (consciousness characterized by all-pervasiveness), ‘*tvam*’ means *alpajñatvaviśiṣṭacaitanya* (consciousness characterized by limited knowledge) and the term ‘*asi*’ indicates identity between them.

Pure Consciousness is the real nature of individual self. The comprehension of the self as the ultimate truth is the highest knowledge, for when this knowledge is once produced our cognition of world appearance ceased. According to the *Advaitins*, an individual being is always free, but a question may be raised whether individual liberation is at all a new achievement or awareness of something, which is already achieved. To them this rejection of the suffering is not a new phenomenon but an individual being rejects that which has already rejected. This knowledge of the object already known is possible through the *mahāvākyas*. An individual being is essentially a liberated being but he does not know this due to the veil of *māyā*. As soon as he comes to know that he is essentially same with *Brahman* by the *Vedic* dictum *Tattvamasi*, he suddenly realizes that he is free. It should be kept in our mind that *mokṣa* is not something eternal to be attained through actions or rituals. It is always within us. Knowledge is capable of eradicating *avidyā* or nescience only. All that a seeker of liberation (*mumukṣu*) needed is to get rid of veil of ignorance, which produces ego and desires. The *Vivaraṇa* School<sup>3</sup> profound that *mokṣa* is of the nature of unique knowledge, which arises from the realization of the truth contained in the *mahāvākya* such as *Tattvamasi*.

Everything in this world is veiled by *māyā* or ignorance. Through the knowledge, one gets rid of *māyā*. However, here knowledge does not imply the ordinary cognition but the awareness of self-realization. *Jagat* (world) is mere appearance, which is the game of *māyā*. Individual self and *Brahman* are not two different things; individual self is nothing but *Brahman* itself. *Śruti*

proclaimed that the path of knowledge is hard to be trodden.<sup>4</sup>The person who possesses four essential qualities can be a disciple of this path of knowledge. These qualities are:

- *Nityānityavastuvivekaḥ*
- *Ihāmutraphalabhogavirāga*
- *Ṣadsampatti (Śama, Dama, Uparati, Titikṣā, Samādhāna, Śraddhā)*
- *Mumukṣutvam*

The first ever qualification of a seeker of the self is discrimination between real and unreal. One must know that what is eternal and what is not. The seeker discriminates between things permanent and transient. What created is not permanent and hence it must destroy in the next moment. Created things cannot bring happiness at all. The *nitya* or eternal is only one, which is *Brahman*. Everything else is impermanent. This is the determination between real and unreal. Our earth and earthly things like our mind, our brilliance all are *anitya*, impermanent. They are *adhyasta* (superimposed) on reality. That which born dies. That which created will destroy. What is the fruit of something will banish. Thus, everything we taste, smell, sense, hear and perceive is transient. The universe is being created will remain. Therefore, we should seek the real. We should carefully discriminate reality from *anitya* or transitory mundane things.

Now through discrimination one understands that this world is impermanent and we should not get attach to it. But generally there is a belief that heaven is a higher world beyond this world and by performing good deeds one can acquire merits and may wish to enjoy happiness in higher world namely heaven. The objects of enjoyment hereafter, as well as the enjoyment of earthly objects like garland of flowers, sandal paste and sex pleasure are transitory being results of action. They cannot bring permanent happiness. After exhausting our merits that have been earned through good deeds we come back to take birth again. *Śruti* confirms us-. “*tad yatheha*

*karmajito lokaḥ kṣīyate ebamebāmutra puṇyajito lokaḥ kṣīyate...*” (Ch. Up. 8.1.6). It means whatever has been acquired here on earth by exertion perishes and whatever is acquired for the next world by sacrifices and other good actions performed on earth will perish. Therefore, it is essential for a conscious seeker to be absolute disinterestedness in the pleasure of this world as well as the heaven. Enjoyment of fruits of action in this world and hereafter is not helpful for spiritual progress. Disregard for all of them is renunciation. Renunciation is regarded as second *sādhana*. It is the desire to give up all transitory enjoyments from this world or beyond this. What is the necessity of renunciation? Through discrimination, we understand that this mundane world is impermanent. Therefore, one should not attach to it. Generally, there is a being in higher world beyond this. However, heavenly pleasure too are impermanent and after our merits are exhausted we come back to take birth again in this world. Therefore, the discriminating intellect avoids all pleasures as nothing. Such person knows for sure that *Brahman* alone is real and all else is unreal.

*Śama* is mind control. It is restraining the mind from going towards sense objects. Our senses are ruled by the mind. By its proper control external senses too come under control. Mind should be kept in check from the pursuit of worldly pleasures. *Dama* is the restraining of the external organs from all objects.

The senses run widely towards their respective objects. Their natural tendency is to run out. A sincere seeker must control them. Our senses are the doors to destruction. They lead rather, mislead us to their respective objects, convincing us that the objects-like sight, taste, smell, touch, and sound-are pleasure producing and eternal. We are deceived. Why ‘*śamadamādi*’ are essential for an aspirant? Śaṅkara deals with this problem. In his ‘*Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*’, Śaṅkara

elucidates with examples. The deer, the elephant, the moth, the fish and the black bee-these five have died by being tied by the string of deep attachment, in any one of the sense objects like sound, touch, colour, odour and taste respectively. In this world, every living being becomes subjected to the bondage of sensual enjoyment. Having heard the music of flute played even by the cruel hunter-party but the deer remains unmoved and is trapped by its own excessive attachment of music. Generally, an elephant can hardly be caught but the hunter trapped by using a trained female elephant in lure of whose pleasant touch the male comes close to its partner and caught. The insect sacrifices its life by jumping in the red-flame of fire for its attachments for beautiful colour. The fish is caught by the angling hook because of its attachment for the pleasant smell of the foodstuff scattered in the area. The bee out of its lust for the sweet taste of honey becomes caught by the petals of the flower.<sup>5</sup> No doubt, this is the pathetic condition of every living being owing to their excessive attachment for the sensual pleasure of one particular organ. It is natural that a human being with five uncontrolled sense- organs will be subjected to prolonged misery. Therefore, the advice of the author is to get rid of sensual enjoyment. The wise ones control their senses and bring them back towards the truth.

*Uparati* is the cessation of the external organs so restrained from the pursuit of objects. The senses and the mind if not given a higher turn, will revert to the world. They must be turned inwards. *Uparati* is placing the controlled mind and senses on inward object i.e. the Self.

*Titikṣā* or forbearance has been considered as the virtue of the seeker of truth. The seeker should attain to such a state that heat or cold, pleasure and pain, suffering and joy all should become same to him. Therefore, he should be able to ignore them absolutely and concentrated on the *ātman*.

*Samādhāna* means tranquility of the mind. However, it cannot be attained if mind runs after external things. It is constant concentration of the mind. What is concentration? It is making the mind one-pointed on the *ātman*. It is resting the mind calming the mind finally –after ages of turbulence. When the mind is running towards the world, it is restless and fickle. When it runs towards its source i.e. *ātman*, it is calm and composed. When that is achieved, there is no more desire for worldliness.

*Śraddhā* is none other than the faith in the truth of the *Vedānta* as taught by the *guru* (spiritual preceptor). Spiritual practice without faith never produces the requisite effect. A firm faith based upon the intellectual understanding that the teachings of the scriptures and of some of one's Master are true leads to the realization of the Reality.

*Mumukṣutvam* is the longing for liberation. This is the ultimate requisite of a seeker. Whatever may be the other qualities in him, if this ultimate quality does not belong to him, there is no hope of realization. When the seeker is equipped with the four above-mentioned *sādhana*s, he becomes able to receive the spiritual guidance.

A disciple equipped with the four pre-requisites should follow the means of *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. It is the process by which one becomes convinced that the *Vedas* in their beginning middle and end teach the identity of *jīva* and *Brahman*. The truth of identity can be found out through the enquiry of the great sayings (*mahāvākyas*). They boldly claimed the essential teachings of the *Upaniṣads* namely; the individual self and *Brahman* are the same.

Our thesis is an attempt at a descriptive as well as critical study of the *Vedic mahāvākya*, '*Tattvamasi*'. In this thesis, we are going to discuss on "*Philosophical Significance*

of *Tattvamasi: A Critical Study*”. We are already discussing on that *mahāvākyas* are essential in the *Advaita Vedāntic* cult. Generally, *mahāvākyas* are considered as four taken one from the specific *Upaniṣad* of each of the *Veda*. *Prajñānam Brahman* from *Aitareya Upaniṣad* of the *R̥gveda*, *Tattvamasi* from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* of the *Sāmaveda*, *AhamBrahmāsmi* from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* of the *Yajurveda*, *Ayamātmā Brahma* from the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* of *Atharvaveda* are considered as *mahāvākyas*.

There are some problems, which compel us to think about *Tattvamasi*. Some of them are given below:

The primary meaning of the word ‘*Tat*’ is God who is the creator of the world and who possesses all auspicious qualities. The primary meaning of the word ‘*tvam*’ is the self which is associated with the states of waking, dream and deepsleep and which is an agent. Any identity between the two senses is impossible in view of the contradictory attributes present in them then how the *jīva-Brahman* identity would be established through the statement *Tattvamasi*?

In the case of *Tattvamasi*, the *Advaitins* have accepted the indeterminate perception because of the fact that it does not reveal the relation between the two i.e. ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’. It has been interpreted by the *Advaitins* that the statement conveys that an individual self exists in himself in the form of *Brahman*. However, they do not admit relation between two, which is known from the incorporation of the term *vaiśiṣṭyānavagāhī*. Whether is it relation-free i.e. *vaiśiṣṭyānavagāhī*? Whether the *mahāvākya* (especially *Tattvamasi*) will be considered as an *arthavāda*? Whether *Tattvamasi* could be taken as an unnecessary repetition? Are all *Vedāntins* accepted the *Advaitic* interpretation of *Tattvamasi*? In what sense they are different from each other? Can *Tattvamasi* be considered mere a thought?



Therefore, we hope that the present research work will be accepted as a humble attempt to answer the raised questions. The present thesis divided into five chapters exclusive of this introduction and conclusion. As per obvious requirement, the chapters will subdivide into different sub-sections. A brief survey of the tradition has been undertaken in the first chapter. The source of the *Vedānta*, its meanings, the three well known inevitable pillars of the *Vedānta* and different school of the *Vedānta* has been discussed and mainly the main tenets of the *Advaita Vedānta* has been taken for discussion. In the next chapter, an attempt has taken to discuss on the *mahāvākyas*, its number, and brief elucidation about the famous four *mahāvākyas*. An attempt has taken to give an explicit and systematic exposition of different *mahāvākyas*. Whether the *mahāvākyas* will be considered as an *arthavāda* or it will be considered as an *angī*? The third chapter concluded with an analytic discussion showing the metaphysical interpretation of *Tattvamasi*. How the *jīva-Brahman* identity has been established? Following the *Advaita* interpretation, we try to discuss it. However, not all of them hold the same view. As per information the author of the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* never admit *bhāgalakṣaṇā* for establish *jīva-Brahman* identity. In what ground the departure from the traditional view that should be thinkable. In the fourth chapter, we mainly stress on the *Dvaita Vedāntin's* views. Each branches stands for a different conception regarding *Tattvamasi*. An attempt to bring out the varied concepts of *Tattvamasi* in all the school of the *Vedānta* is not an easy job. The differences are noticed here more specially with regard to the relation of *jīva-Brahman*. Śaṅkara established *jīva-Brahman* identity. Rāmānuja emphasized on *apṛthaksiddhi*. Nimbārka admits difference between them as well as identity too. His followers very much eager to establish such view and they cite many spiritual examples to establish it. Madhva defines it as '*Atattvamasi*'. Now whether there is any similarity among their views. We try to find a common significance among

the different theories. In the next chapter includes an analysis of the question whether *Tattvamasi* has a practical significance or not. If philosophy confines only in theory then it will not touch the life of us. Therefore, practical applicability of *mahāvākyas* would be judged. Western philosophers like Schopenhauer and Paul Deussen also have made some remarkable contribution on *Tattvamasi*. We respect their contribution.

As per information gathered from different sources, it is clear that not so much research work has been attempted in this area. It is true that some light throws on the *mahāvākyas* but an elaborate and detail critical study on *Tattvamasi* has not yet been discussed. Philosophical significance of *Tattvamasi* (including *Advaitins* and *Dvaitins* view) as proposed herein has not been hitherto attempted. Among the works available, the followings are worth mentioning:

K.B. Archak in his book, “*Tattvamasi in Brahmasutra Sankara Bhasya*” deals with *Tattvamasi*. Śaṅkara’s commentaries of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* and *Brahmasūtra* comprehensively explain the *jīva-Brahman* identity. The concept scatters in Śaṅkara’s interpretation of the *Brahmasūtras*. The author tried to arrange the different views of Śaṅkara on *Tattvamasi* and systematically synthesize those views.

Tapan Kumar Chakraborty in his book ‘*Vedānta Mahāvākyārtha Vicāra*’ (Bengali book) focused on *mahāvākyas*. The book deals with the metaphysical and linguistic analysis.

A Ganapathy in his book, ‘*Tat Tvam Asi*’, discussed on different types of *sāmānādhikaraṇya* and its significance and showed what type of *sāmānādhikaraṇya* is appropriate for *Tattvamasi*.

Apart from this works, a few research articles have published in this area. Here a few of them:

Swami Pravananda-“That Art Thou”, *Prabuddha Bharat*, vol. LXX, 1965.

Dr Tapan Kumar Chakraborty-“The Advaita view of Identity”, *Lights on Philosophy*, Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar, Kolkata-6, 2002.

K. N. Neelakantan Elayath-“The Ethical Interpretation of Tattvamasi”, *Perspective of Samkara*, Rashtriya Sankara Jayanti Mahotsava Commemoration Volume; eds. Dept Of Culture, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt of India, 1959.

Bina Gupta and William C Wilcox –“Tat tvam asi: an important identity statement or a mere Tautology”, *Philosophy East and West*, Vol.34, No. 1(Jan1984) pp. 85-94.

From the above information, it is clear to all of us that none of the works covers the study being proposed herein. Therefore, we hope that this research work will be accepted. The present study based mainly per necessity on the original text of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* and its various commentaries done by *ācāryas* and his followers. We have followed the English translation of Śamkara’s commentary on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* by Swāmi Nikhilānda and Lokeshwarānanda, on the *Vedāntasūtras* by Swami Gambhirānanda and George Thibaut. Besides these, we follow some primary books like Rāmānujācārya’s *Vedārthasaṃgraha*, Madvāchrya’s *Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya*, Nimbārka’s *Daśośloki*, Vallabhacarya’s *Aṇubhāṣya* Sureśwarācārya’s *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, Sadānandayogī’s *Vedāntasāra*, and Dharmarājadhvarīndra’s *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* etc.

Our method is mainly descriptive and very much faithful towards the scriptural and primary text. From this point of view, also the present study assumes special significance. There are many branches of *Vedānta* philosophy. Each of its branches stands for a different conceptions regarding *Tattvamasi*. An attempt to bring out the varied concept of *Tattvamasi* in all schools of

the *Vedānta* is not an easy job. It needs to be pointed out here that the present study focuses on the mainly *Advaitic* view point. However, a chapter will be dedicated on the *Dvaitavedāntins'* views. It will be limited among Rāmānuja, Madhva, Nimbārka, and Vallabha. We will not confine our discussion only in classical interpretations. We also try to search its modern interpretation and significance.

## References:

1. *Bṛhadārṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II.iv.4,  
Swami Nikhilananda, *The Upanisads A New Translation*, vol.3 (Mayabati: Advaita Ashrama, 2008), pp.174-175.
2. *Ādiśāntā hi anutpannāḥ prakṛti eva sunirbṛtaḥ/  
Sarve dharmāḥ samāvinnāḥ ajaṁ sāmyaṁ biśāradam// Māṇḍūkya-kārikā* 4-93  
*Upaniṣad*, trans. Swami Lokeshwarananda (Calcutta: Ananda Publishers Pvt. Limited, 1999), p.454.
3. Padmapāda, a direct disciple of Śaṅkara and Prakāśātman are the originators of *Vivaraṇa* School. On Padmapada's *Pañcapādikā*, (commentary on Śaṅkara's introduction to and commentary on four sutras of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*) Prakāśātman wrote his commentary called *Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa*. These two are the important basic works of *Vivaraṇa* School. Vācaspati-miśra is the founder of *Bhāmati* School. His important works on *Vedāntadarśan* are the *Bhāmati* and *Tattvasamīkṣā*. *Bhāmati* is a commentary on a portion of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on Śaṅkara, while *Tattvasamīkṣā* is a commentary on the *Brahmasiddhi* of Mandanmīśra.
4. *Kṣurasya dhārā niśita durartyaya/  
Dūrgam pathastāt kabayo vadanti//Kathopaniṣad* 1.3.14  
*Upaniṣat-Saṁgrahaḥ* (containing 188 upanisads), ed.  
Prof.J.L.Sastri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), p.8.
5. *Śabdādibhiḥ pañcabhireva pañca/  
Pañcatvamāpuḥ svaguṇena baddhāḥ//  
Kurangamātangapatangamīna/  
Bhṁgā naraḥ pañcabhir ancitah kim // Vivekacūḍrāmaṇi*-76  
Śaṅkarācārya, *Vivekacūḍrāmaṇi*, trans. Swami Madhvananda (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2009), p.35.

## First Chapter

### The Legacy of *Vedānta Darśan*

#### Section-I

##### Sacred *Veda*

Sacred *Veda* is the most ancient literature in India and it is regarded as the heart of Indian philosophy, religion and culture. The term ‘*veda*’ derives from the root ‘*vid*’ means to know together with the ‘*ñij*’ and ‘*ghan*’ in *karaṇavāchye*. The root ‘*vid*’ has several meanings as-

- *Vid* means *jñāne*, to know
- *Vid* means *sattiyām*, to be
- *Vid* means *lābhe*, to obtain or to profit by
- *Vid* means *vicāraṇe*, to think about
- *Vid* means *ākhyāne*, to declare, to communicate.<sup>1</sup>

According to Swāmi Dayānanda we may say that by which man reaches supreme knowledge, by the study of which one becomes learned that helps to attain knowledge, and sets man to discuss about knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Our scholars derive the term ‘*Veda*’ from the root, ‘*vid*’ and interpret to mean knowledge. However, this knowledge is not ordinary sense-perception type knowledge rather this knowledge is that of *gods* mentioned in the *hymns*, sacrifices of the *Brāhmaṇas*, ultimate supreme truths of the *Upaniṣads*.

Our traditional view is that *Veda* was not composed by any ordinary being or by any divine being but it revealed near to pious sages. Their minds were very much pure having no mundane attachments. They were called *ṛṣi* or *mantradraṣṭāḥ*.<sup>3</sup> Our ancient scholars tried to propose various

definitions. Āpastambha defines *Veda* as “*mantrabrāhmaṇayorvedanāmadheyam*”.<sup>4</sup> It means *mantra* and *brāhmaṇa* together composed the *Veda*. Sāyanācārya defines that *Vedas* help man to obtain knowledge neither by perception nor by inference. *Veda* is extraordinary means to attain, which is good for humanity, and to avoid evil.<sup>5</sup> Some define *Veda* as eternal speech- “*vācavirupanitya uccāraṇa viśayatā*”, some as “*sajātīya uccāraṇa sāpekṣa*”. As human being breathes normally without any effort similarly, *Veda* was uttered by *Īśvara* like the natural process of breathing. In the moment of creation, *Īśvara* without effecting any change simply repeated the same *Veda* in their order and arrangements. For this reason, *Vedas* are considered as ‘*apauruṣeya*’. *Vedas* are also called *Śruti*. The disciples simply chant the *hymns* of the sacred *Vedas* exactly in the same way and process as they hear from their respected *gurus*. *Veda* remains unwritten for centuries but to memories the whole literature became a mammoth task and day by day it became impossible to protect these by any human mind. Feeling the necessity Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana classified *Vedas* into *Ṛk*, *Sāma*, *Yajuḥ* and *Atharva* and distributed his meritorious disciples for preserving and handed down to next generation.

<i>Veda</i>	Disciple
<i>Ṛgveda</i>	Paila
<i>Sāmaveda</i>	Jaimini
<i>Yajurveda</i>	Vaiśampāyana
<i>Atharvaveda</i>	Sumanta

*Mantra* and *Brāhmaṇa* composed *Veda*. Then we find further conceptual developments in *Āraṇyakas* and *Upaniṣads*. Therefore, in each *Veda* there are four sub sections-

- *mantra or saṁhitā*,
- *brāhmaṇa*,
- *āraṇyaka* and
- *upaniṣad*

In *Mantras* or *Saṁhitās*, we find that worshippers dedicated various prayers, *hymns* to *gods*. All sorts of ideas also enshrined here in subtle manner deals with ritualistic process and sacrificial ceremonies. In *Āraṇyaka*, we find some esoteric ideas. The significances of the worship were enumerated and in the *Upaniṣads*, they reached their final form. It is said that the *Upaniṣads* are quintessence of the *Vedas*.

There are four *Vedas*- *Ṛk*, *Sāma*, *Yajuḥ* and *Atharva*. Each of the four *Vedas* has four parts- *Saṁhitā*, *Brāhmaṇa*, *Āraṇyaka* and *Upaniṣad*. The *Upaniṣads* as the last part of the *Vedas* are called *Vedānta*. *Vedānta* has been recognised one of the most important, powerful, widely well-known philosophical system of Indian legacy. The word ‘*Vedānta*’ literally means the end-portions or the essence of the *Vedas*. Generally, the *Upaniṣads* are thought at the end of the *Vedic* instruction and the latter philosophers found the final aim of the *Vedas* in *Upaniṣads*. As the *Upaniṣads* are the concluding portion and essence of the *Vedas*, the term ‘*Vedānta*’ is generally used to denote the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*, which were realised by the *Vedic* seers over a range more than a thousand years. *Vedānta* are called *Upaniṣads* for three reasons-

- They are the last part of each *Veda*.
- They are recited lastly after the recitation of the three other parts of each *Veda*.
- They contain the essence or the sum and substance of all the *Vedas*.

Sadānanda in his *Vedāntasāra* rightly opined that-“*vedānto nāmopaniṣadpramāṇam*.”<sup>6</sup>The term has two meanings—firstly, “*upaniṣad eva pramāṇam*”<sup>7</sup>-according to the derivation it



denotes that the means of *Upaniṣads* is *Vedānta*. Secondly, “*upaniṣado yatro pramāṇamiti vā*”<sup>8</sup>-according to this derivation the decision whose very root enshrined in the *Upaniṣad* is also *Vedānta* or ‘*upaniṣad pramāṇam*’ stand behind the decision of those doctrines. *Vedānta* is also known as *uttaramīmāṃsā*. The *śāstra* (scripture) with rays of arguments help to understand the meanings of the *Upaniṣads* is called *Uttaramīmāṃsā* or *Vedānta*. However, the meaning and enshrined significance of the *Upaniṣads* are not easy to understand. Hence, it includes the other texts, which are auxiliary and instrumental to the understanding of the meaning of the *Upaniṣads*. The scholars believed that the *śāstras*, which, help to grasp the meaning of *Upaniṣads*, namely *Śārīrakasūtras* and its *bhāṣyas*, should also treat as *Vedānta*. Sadānanda opined –“*yat upakārīṇiśārīrakasūtrādīni ca*”. It means that even all commentaries, which help to understand the *Upaniṣadic* utterances, are to be taken as *Vedānta* also. This indicated by the word ‘*ādi*’. The meaning of the word ‘*Vedānta*’ has been extended to include all the vast literature written by commentary or gloss on the basic text or any system of philosophy claiming to be based on the *Upaniṣads*.<sup>9</sup> Brahmānanda Sarasvatī opined that *Vedānta* literature comprises of five books namely, *Śārīrakamīmāṃsā* having four chapters, its commentary and gloss, the book composed by Vācaspati Miśra, i.e., *Bhāmatī*, its gloss *Kalpataru* and its gloss the *Parimala*.<sup>10</sup>

## Section-II

### The Three Pillars of *Vedānta*

Actually there are three pillars of *Vedānta* on which remains the main tenets of *Vedānta* namely *Śruti*, *Smṛti* and *Nyāya*. The system has based on these three canonical works. These are collectively termed as *prasthāna traya*. As a part of the *Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads* belong to

*Śruti* and the *Upaniṣads* regarded as the *Śrutiprasthāna*. Our tradition has always given the status of the highest authority to the *Upaniṣads* since it has been unquestioningly accepted as *Śruti*. Generally, in *Sanskṛt* the meaning of a word is determined with the help of derivation. Here the word ‘*Upaniṣad*’ has formed from the root verb ‘*sad*’, prefixed by ‘*upa*’ means near and ‘*ni*’ means surely. The verbal root ‘*sad*’ has several meanings: loosening, movement and annihilation. Remembering all these three senses together, we may say that the word ‘*Upaniṣad*’ refers to such divine knowledge or wisdom, which loosens the bands of *samsāra* of a being, annihilates his *ajñāna* or ignorance of his real nature and leads to *Brahman* or God or Absolute.<sup>11</sup> *Upaniṣad* is the self-knowledge or *ātmavidyā*.<sup>12</sup> The book or scriptural work that teaches this self-knowledge is also termed as *Upaniṣad*. Such type of secondary meaning is accorded in our day-to-day language. As per example, water is my life. It means the water is my source of livelihood.<sup>13</sup>

The *Bhagavadgītā*, which utters the teaching of the *Upaniṣadic* doctrines, has known as the *Smṛtiprasthāna*. The *Bhagavadgītā* considered as the essence of the *Upaniṣadic* philosophy. It is said be the immortal milk (*Bhagavadgītā*) was extracted by the cowherd Lord *Kṛṣṇa* out of the *Upaniṣadic* cows making Arjuna the calf, for the benefit of the learned.<sup>14</sup>

Different *Upaniṣads* did not produce a coherent picture of its various subjects. It became necessary to give them a more coherent look. Bādarāyaṇa, the great author had taken an attempt to systematize and harmonize the *Upaniṣadic* philosophy. His efforts have received its final form through these *Brahmasūtra* which also known as *Vedāntasūtra* or *Uttaramīmāṃsāsūtra* etc. Through the systemization of the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*, *Brahmasūtra* build the metaphysical frame of the *Vedānta*. *Brahmasūtra* because of its

logical and reflective style it has defined as the *Nyāyaprasthāna*. *Brahmasūtra* divided into four chapters under the headings like *samanvaya*, *avirodha*, *sādhana* and *phala*. The chapters are further sub-divided into four *pādas* each of which constitutes a number of *adhikaraṇas* dealing with specific topics. We may submit a table of this:

Adhyaya	Pada-I	Pada-II	Pada-	Pada-IV	Compiled in the <i>adhikaraṇas</i>
1	31	32	43	28	134
2	37	45	53	22	157
3	27	41	66	52	186
4	19	21	16	22	78

The *sūtras* are cryptic statements and afford full-fledged interpretation to the commentators.

It is for this reason that the *Ācāryas* of *Vedānta* have chosen the *Brahmasūtra* to comment upon in their major work and their respective systems. *Brahmasūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa has attracted the attention of the distinguish scholars over the years, who have enriched the *Vedānta* literature by their brilliant expositions. However, the differences in their views give rise to the emergence of various schools of *Vedānta* in later days. The names of the scholars along with their schools are given below:

Śaṅkara	<i>Advaita</i>
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C.E.788-820	
Bhāskara C.E.996-1061	<i>Bhedābheda</i>
Yādavprakāśa C.E.1000	<i>Bhedābheda</i>
Rāmānuja C.E. 1017- 1137	<i>Viśiṣṭādvaita</i>
Madhva C.E. 1238-1317	<i>Dvaita</i>
Nimbārka latter half of 13 <sup>th</sup> century	<i>Dvaitādvaita</i>
Śrīkantha C.E. 1270	<i>Śaiva-viśiṣṭādvaita</i>
Śripati C.E. 1400	<i>Bhedābhedatmakaviśiṣṭādvaita</i>
Vallabha C.E. 1479-1544	<i>Śuddhādvaita</i>

Śuka C.E.1550	<i>Bhedāvada</i>
Vijñānabhikṣu C.E.1550	<i>Ātma-brahmaikya-bhedāvada</i>
Baladeva C.E. 1725	<i>Achintya-bhedābheda</i>

Moreover, the three sources of this philosophy have been interpreted in different ways by different commentators. Therefore different schools of the *Vedānta* have developed.

### Section-III

#### Main features of the *Advaita Vedānta*

*Vedānta* is generally divided into two main sections as *Dvaita* and *Advaita*. The term ‘*dvaita*’ derives from prefix ‘*dvi*’ then root ‘*I*’ together with suffix ‘*cta*’ in *karaṇvāchya*. Then the term ‘*dvaita*’ is formed by the addition of the suffix ‘*aṇ*’ in *bhāvārthe* or *svārthe*. The attribute of being united with two is *dvaita*. The term ‘*vāda*’ derives from the root ‘*vad*’ together with the suffix ‘*ghan*’ in *bhāvārthe*. It means right judgment. In *Dvaitavāda*, there are three real entities as *Brahman*, *jīva* and *jagat*. *Na dvaita=Advaita*. *Advaitavāda* is the negation of *Dvaitavāda*. We got the term ‘*Advaitavāda*’ from ‘*advaiter vāda*’. *Dvaitavāda* is a system of philosophy in which one Supreme Entity i.e. *Brahman* unite with two entities, which are also real. On the other hand, *Advaitavāda* is the negation of *Dvaitavāda*. In this system, *Brahman* does not unite with

anything neither with *jīva* or individual nor with *jagat* or world. We uttered from the *Bṛhadāraṇyakabhāṣyavārttika* –

*Dvidhetarṁ dvītamityāhus tadbhāvo dvaitamucyate/*

*Tad niṣedhena cā dvaitam pratyag vastvabhīdhīyate//*

*(Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣadbhāṣyavārttika 4.3.1807)*

The *Advaita Vedānta* has mainly three stages-Pre-Śaṅkara, Śaṅkara and Post-Śaṅkara. To interpret the inner significance of the *Advaita* teachings the scholars have never become unanimous. According to Śaṅkara the principal teaching of the *Advaita Vedānta* is-

*Brahma satyaṁ jaganmithyā jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ / (Brahmajñāvalīmālā, 20)*

The truth of the second and third teaching is implied by the first. Actually, if *Advaita*=*Na dvaita*, be the conclusions of the *Advaitins* then it follows that *jagat* and *jīva* never be regarded as separate realities.

a) *Brahma satyam*

In the *Advaita Vedānta*, *Brahman* or self has said to be the only reality and whatever is other than, self has declared as false. The Self alone is real in the sense that pure knowledge or consciousness is real, since it is beyond of all changes and modifications and never disappeared at all, therefore eternal. We know from Śaṅkara's commentary that Vāṣkali asked his teacher Bādhva about the nature of *Brahman*. Bādhva explained *Brahman* merely by his silence or not uttering a word. When the question was asked repeatedly a second and a third time, he replied, "I have already spoken, but of course you do not understand. That self is Quiescence."<sup>15</sup> *Brahman* is inexpressible. Any object can describe through the help of its

attributes, action, class or relation. However, being devoid all of these *Brahman* cannot be expressed through words. *Brahman* best described as “*neti neti...*”<sup>16</sup>. Yājñavalkya uttered that *Brahman* is neither gross nor subtle neither short nor long, neither heat nor moist, neither shadow nor darkness, neither air nor *ākāśa*. It is unattached; it is without taste or smell, without eyes or ears, without tongue or mind. It is non-effulgent, without vital breath or mouth, without measure and without exterior or interior. It does not anything or eaten by anyone. Through these negative descriptions ṛṣi (the seer of truth) depicted that *Brahman* is devoid of all attributes and is one only, without a second. It means that *Brahman* may be expressed actually via negative as being not this or not that when compared to anything. The *Upaniṣads* speak of *Brahman* negatively as having no attribute. *Brahman* is devoid of qualifying attributes or characteristic marks. Śruti said-*Brahman* is neither gross, nor atomic, neither small, nor long etc. *Brahman* cannot be grasped through the sense organ that is why *Brahman* is beyond the reach of mind since mind knows only the object, which is presented before it through senses. Śruti told us that *Brahman* is not ascertainable by speech nor by mind-‘*avānmanasogocaram*’.<sup>17</sup> *Brahman* is devoid of three limitations-*deśapāricchda* or limitation of space, *kālapāricchda* or limitation of time and *vastupāricchda* or limitation of objects. *Brahman* being devoid of space limitation is omnipresent, being devoid of time limitation is eternal and being devoid of object limitation is one.<sup>18</sup> The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* has maintained that “*ekamevādvitīyam Brahman*”(6.2.1). *Brahman* is only one without a second. Śaṅkarācārya in his commentary unfolded the very much significance of these words. In this *mantra* the term ‘*eka*’ stands for non discrimination of homogeneous changes, ‘*eva*’ stands for part-whole non discrimination and ‘*advitīya*’ for heterogeneous non-discrimination.<sup>19</sup> Vidyāraṇya(1400C.E.) in his famous writings *Pañcadaśī* tries to expound

these with the help of a beautiful example. The difference because of the leaves, flowers and fruits of the same tree is called *svagatabheda* (difference within the same object). One tree differs from another tree and this difference is called *sajātīyabheda* (difference among the species of the same kind). Again, a tree is not only different from other trees; it is different from rocks etc. This difference between a tree and a rock is called *vijātīyabheda* (difference among the different kinds). If there had been two *Brahman*, we able to speak of *sajātīyabheda* or *vijātīyabheda* between them. Being partless *Brahman* is beyond of *svagatabheda*. The three kinds of differences are totally absent in *Brahman*.<sup>20</sup>

An accepted procedure to define *Brahman* in thus manner that *Brahman* is in essence *sat*, *cit*, *ānanda*. “*saccidānandamayam param brahma*”(Nṛsimhatāpanīyopaniṣad 1.6). However, these are not attributes or adjectives of *Brahman* and they are also non-different from another. To them which is *sat* is also *cit* and that which is *cit* is identical with *ānanda*. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* defines *Brahman* as “*satyaṁ jñānam anantam Brahman*” (2.1.3). This definition distinguishes the reality from world, which is non-eternal, non-intelligent, and non-bliss.

There is another method to understand *Brahman*. It is said that *Brahman* is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world.<sup>21</sup> The features of creation belong to *Brahman* for some time and help us to acquire some knowledge about *Brahman* for all times. These criterions will be disappeared when one realizes the true nature of *Brahman*.

b) Jagat mithyā

The second cardinal doctrine of the *Advaita Vedānta* is *jagat mithyā* or world is false. In the *Advaita Vedānta*, reality is one without a second and that is none other than *Brahman*.



However, the non-duality of reality cannot be proved as false. That is why the concept of falsity is so important in an *Advaita* parlance. In the *Advaita Vedānta*, falsity does not mean unreality. Here the word ‘false’ or ‘*mithyā*’ is a technical expression denotes ‘*sadāsatvilakṣaṇa*’. The *Advaitins* only accept the empirical reality or *vyavahārika sattā*<sup>22</sup> of the universe, which is nothing but a false appearance. Our scholars define that which cannot be admitted as real or unreal or as both real and unreal or as neither real nor unreal at the same time and locus is regarded as ‘*sadāsadvilakṣaṇa*’ and this called *mithyā*. Actually linguistic expression fails to describe it so it is *anirvācya*. Now the questions arise how should falsity be explained? Why world is other than reality and non-reality? Reality is consciousness. That which is non-contradicted at any time is *Sat* or Real (*trikālāvādhita*). Since *Brahman* is never contradicted at any time, *Brahman* is *sat* or real. However, the world appears to us as real, but the appearance of the world shall disappear when the knowledge of *Brahman* arises. World is not ontological existent since it is sublated by the knowledge of *Brahman*. That is why the world cannot be regarded as *sat*. Again, the world appears so it does not consider as unreal. The world cannot be regarded as unreal, since which is *asat* or unreal can never be manifested. As per example, a barren woman’s son or hare’s horn, the world appearance does not non-existent since it is perceived. According to the principle of non-contradiction, the world cannot be admitted as both real and unreal together at a same time and locus. Being mutually exclusive the presence of *sat* and *asat* in the same locus at one and the same time is totally impossible. The existence and nonexistence are contradictory terms. There is no intermediate possibility between them. We know very well that two contradictory predicates cannot be both true and both false at the same time. The world cannot be considered either as *sat* or *asat* and neither as devoid both of them. The

existence and non-existence are contradictory terms. There is no intermediate possibility between them. We know very well that two contradictory predicates cannot be both true and both false at the same time *Mithyā* is to be named as *anirvācya* or inexpressible through words. Prof. Nirod Baran Chakraborty in his famous thesis “*The Advaita Concept of Falsity: A Critical Study*” rightly observed –“...the *Advaitins* never deny the objectivity and externality of the world. To the *Advaitins*, the world has both objectivity and externality but it has no reality at all”.<sup>23</sup>

The *Advaitin* never denies the empirical reality of the world only denies the transcendental reality of the world. This may be explained with the help of popular example. In the case of snake-rope illusion, we perceive snake instead of a piece of rope. The rope never be called as ‘*sat*’ or real since, it was not there. The rope is not *asat* like barren-woman’s son because we perceive this. Something, which is *asat*, can never be perceived. The snake cannot be *sadāsat* because co-existence is impossible. Thus in illusion this snake is *sadāsadvilakṣaṇa* which is technically called *anirvacanīya* or logically incompatible. *Advaita* scholars say that something may be false if it has superimposed or ascribed on something else. As per example, in the case of rope- snake illusion the snake is false because it is superimposed on a piece of rope. Due to some unmindfulness or feeble light, someone failed to know the rope and due to the ignorance of the rope, a snake is seen. Actually, the person superimposed the snake on the piece of rope. The superimposed snake is false. By showing the same argument, the *Advaitin* proves the falsity of the world too. Similarly, the world is superimposed on *Brahman* by *māyā*, which has the twin powers of concealment, and projection.<sup>24</sup> *Māyā* through its *āvaraṇaśakti* covers and hides the locus, whereas *vikṣepaśakti* helps to project something as true, which is not true at all. The illusory snake is superimposed on rope which

is its locus on *adhikaraṇa* or *adhisthāna* and it is on the knowledge of *adhisthāna* that the superimposed object is known to be *mithyā* or false. We fail to know that the snake, which appears, is an illusory one until we have the knowledge of the *adhikaraṇa* namely the rope on which the snake is superimposed. The apparent world is being felt to be real so long as we do not have the knowledge of *Brahman*, which is its *adhikaraṇa*.

c) Ancient Ācāryas' views on jīva-Brahman identity

Āśmarathya, ancient ācārya of the *Vedānta* upholds that the relation between *jīva* and *Brahman* is *tādātmya*. According to him as the sparks issuing from a fire, are not absolutely different from the fire as they participate in the nature of the fire. On the other hand, sparks are not absolutely non-different from the fire because in such case sparks could not be distinguished neither from fire nor from each other. Similarly, the individual selves, which are effect of *Brahman*, are not absolutely different from *Brahman*. Otherwise, they are not of nature of knowledge. The souls are not absolutely non-different from *Brahman* because, in that case they could not be distinguishing from each other. Secondly, if they were identical with *Brahman* and therefore omniscient, it would be useless to give them any instruction like *Tattvamasi*. Hence, individuals are somehow different and non-different from *Brahman*. This view is known as *bhedābhedavāda*.<sup>25</sup>

According to Auḍulomi, both difference and non-difference become clearly discernible as bound up with the different states of the self under bondage and liberation. Generally being unacquainted by the contact with its different limiting adjuncts the individual self is absolutely different from the Supreme Self in the time of bondage. However, being purified means of supreme knowledge it may pass-out of the body and become one with the Supreme

Self. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* utters-“*eṣa samprasādaḥ asmachhīrāt samuthhāya param jyotirūpasampadya svena rūpeṇābhinippadyate* (8.12.3). It is said that upto the moment of emancipation being reached the individual self and the Supreme Self are different. However, the emancipated self is no longer different from the Supreme Self, since there is no further cause of difference. The technical name of the doctrine advocated by Auḍulomi is ‘*satyabhedavāda*’.<sup>26</sup>

Kāśkr̥tsna, the another ancient *ācārya* holds the view that the non-modified Supreme Self itself is the individual self and nothing else. According to Śaṅkara the view of Kāśkr̥tsna is grasped to be in accord with the *Upaniṣads*, for it agrees with the instruction sought to be imparted as stated in such *Śruti* like ‘That thou art’ (*Ch. Up.* 6.8.7) and from the view point of non-difference, the attainment of immortality as a result of the knowledge self is quite in order.

In this connection, Vācaspati (900C.E) further explained that being absolutely non-different from *Brahman* is truly the natural status of this individual self. As per example, by realising the reality of a rope one’s illusion of serpent in the rope disappears or advising a prince being grown up in a ‘*mlechha*’ family that you are the prince but not ‘*mlechha*’ the previous wrong notion of his being ‘*mlechha*’ disappeared. Similarly, ones *avidyā* gets cease and the real nature of the individual self is attained by the instruction of ‘*Tattvamasi*’ through the recognised course of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*. This is the view of Kāśkr̥tsna.<sup>27</sup>

d) Popular views on jīva-Brahman identity

The relation between *jīva* and *Brahman* has explained by the three different theories. They are- limitation theory, appearance theory and reflection theory. We try to explain these theories briefly.

*Avacchedavāda*: The limitation theory or *avacchedavāda* was profounded by Vācaspati Miśra. It is an attempt to establish that the individual self is nothing but the Absolute *Brahman*. Generally, this theory is explained by pot-space analogy. The space being limited by pot is defined as pot-space or *ghatākāśa*. The pot-space is nothing but a part of eternal sky. Similarly, the Universal Self limited by *antaḥkaraṇa*<sup>28</sup> is known as individual self, which is none other than the part of *Brahman*. There are many *sūtras* in favour of this limitation theory. As per example, we may say from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*- “*yathāgneḥvisphulingā vyuccarantye bamebāsmādātmanaḥ sarbam prāṇāḥ sarbe lokāḥ sarbe devāḥ sarbāni vyuccarantiḥ*” (2.2.20). It means from a big fire comes out small sparks similarly from *Ātman* comes out all living beings like all men, all gods, all entities. All these various small living beings are but only parts of *Brahman*.

Now an opponent may ask that whether an individual self is really a part of *Brahman*? Is there any possibility of having any part of part less *Brahman*? If *Brahman* has parts then it will be non-eternal. On the other hand, if *jīva* becomes a part of *Brahman* then the sufferings of *jīva* will be of *Brahman* also. In reply, the *Advaitins* argue that though the individual self is not really a part of *Brahman* but it felt to be a part of part less *Brahman*. The *Advaitins* argue that, though the space is part less it appeared as *ghatākāśa*, *mathākāśa*, *patākāśa* etc. Similarly, though the individual self is not really a part of *Brahman* but it felt to be a part of part less *Brahman*. Gauḍapāda stated that as the limited sky wrongly asserted to be created or

destroyed the limited self is wrongly said to born or dead.<sup>29</sup> Following him, we may say that in spite of many pot-spaces being created when broken is unified into the eternal space. Similarly, though the individuals felt to be innumerable when released from bondage are unified in that Supreme Self. Now again one may asked that if the individuals are apparently different and truly, non-different from *Brahman* then all individuals should be mutually non-different. However, our everyday experience against this conclusion. The *Advaitins* replied that the space being one and indivisible is the same in all rooms. But the smoke and dust of one room is not felt in other rooms owing to the separate limitations of those rooms like walls etc. the sense body connection of one being different from that of others the pleasure and pain of our are not felt in other individuals.

*Ābhāsavāda*: Vidyāraṇyamuni who follows mainly the *Vivaraṇa* tradition admits a modified form of the reflection theory, which is generally reflected to as *ābhāsavāda*. While the *Vivaraṇa* School regards the reflection as real and as identical with the prototype the theory admitted in the *Pañcadaśī* holds that the reflection (*ābhāsa*) is nothing but mere appearance, an illusory manifestation. *Ābhāsa* is nothing but a seeming appearance.<sup>30</sup> It is neither identical with the underlying reality nor is itself real. According to this view, the apposition between the *jīva* and *Brahman* is through sublation (*bādhā*) and not through identification. Vidyāraṇya was not the founder of *ābhāsavāda*. Before him *Vārttikāra*, Sureśwara, who was the direct disciple of Śaṅkara, suggested the doctrine of *ābhāsa*. He admitted that the reflection is unreal. Sureśwara depicted that *jīvas* are reflections of *Brahman* (*cidānvāsa*) on individual *antaḥkaraṇa* and this reflection being different from the original is a false phenomenon. Therefore, pure *cit* that runs into bondage through the *ābhāsa* will be liberated with the destruction of the *ābhāsa*. According to him, *Brahman*, through its own *māyā*,

seemed to forget its real nature and appeared as *jīva*. He gave the example of a prince who brought up by the cowboys from infancy forgot his real nature and behave like a cowboy. When the prince realizes his real nature, he received his real position. So also does *Brahman* through its own knowledge, seems to be released from the so-called bondage.

*Pratibimbavāda*: Two main views are found regarding this non-different since *bimba* and *pratibimba* are identical or non-different reflection of *Brahman*. One of them may be described in thus way-when *Brahman* is reflected in *avidyā*, the prototype or *bimba* is called *Īśvara* while its reflection or *pratibimba* is called *jīva*. The other view depicts that both *Īśvara* and *jīva* are reflection of *Brahman* in the mirror of only *avidyā* while *jīva* is the reflection of *Brahman* in the mirror of *avidyā* along with egoism. Whatever may be the difference we can say generally that reflection theory accepts that *Īśvara* as *Brahman* in a particular condition. Of being, the *bimba* or prototype to the reflection is called *jīva*. The *jīva* is the reflection of consciousness on egoism. The reflection imitates its prototype. The face reflecting in a mirror always becomes identical with the original face, otherwise we could not have identified ourselves seeing the reflection of our face in the mirror. Just as on the removal of the mirror the reflection, merge back into the original object in the same manner on the removal of the adjunct of nescience the *jīvas* are one with *Brahman*. Just as the reflections appearing in mirror are identical with prototype, in the same way *jīvas* also are identical and one with *Brahman*. The same holds good for *Īśvara*. However, with this difference that while the *jīvas* are affected by the dual potencies of *māyā* while the *Īśvara* above such influences.

Generally, the *Vivaraṇa* School upholds the theory of reflection or *pratibimbavāda*. Padmapāda (900 C.E.), Prakāśatman (1200 C.E.) and other followers of *Vivaraṇa* School advocated the theory of *pratibimbavāda*. The followers try to explain it by showing the example of face of *Caitra* and its reflection in the mirror, that self and *Brahman* are identical. Only when a mirror is taken before the face, it appears as prototype or *bimbamukha*. However, if there is no mirror and no reflection of the face, then all consider the face is pure face or *śuddhamukha*. When the face is reflected on the mirror becomes *bimbamukha*. Here technically the face is called prototype or *bimbamukha* (when there is a mirror before the face) the mirror is determinant or *upādhi*. *Upādhi* means something adventitious apparently influencing something else. The image on the mirror is called reflected face or *pratibimbamukha*. Now it would be easy to understand that the reflection of the face on a mirror and the image on the mirror is identical with the original face based on the analogy. The *Advaitins* tried to prove that Pure *Brahman* and *Īśvara* are identical and the individuals are identical with *Brahman*. According to the *Advaitins*, there is universal pure consciousness or *caitanya*. *Śuddha Brahman* is reflected on *avidyā*, which is endowed with three qualities *sattva*, *rajaḥ* and *tamaḥ*. On them *sattva* has the properties of reflection. Therefore, Pure Consciousness becomes capable of being reflected on *avidyā*. Some *Advaitins* maintain that there is one Universal Consciousness or *caitanya*, that when it becomes the prototype, it is called ‘*Īśvara* consciousness’, and then when it is reflected in an adjunct its reflection is called consciousness. In the theory of ‘one-self’ (*ekajīvacāda*), the nescience is the adjunct in which *Īśvara* –consciousness is reflected. In theory of ‘many-self’ (*bahujīvacāda*) internal organs are the adjuncts on which ‘I-consciousness’ is reflected. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī (16<sup>th</sup> century) stated that the difference between the original and its reflection is apparent and not



real. Due to the mirror the face is superimposed on it, everyone accept that reflection is the same as the original. Similarly, the original and its reflection are not essentially different. Therefore, the analogy of the original and its reflection is offered to establish the identity of the self with *Brahman*.<sup>31</sup>

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*tadyathārthavādi vedāntasamgrahavākyeni “athāto brahmajñāsā” (B.S.1.1.1) ityādīni sūtrādīni ādi śabdena bhagavad- gītādyadhyātmā śāstrāni gṛhante, teṣāṃ api upaniṣacchabda vacyatvāt iti bhabah”//Subodhinī of Vedāntasāra-3, ibid., p.8.*

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26. *Bhāmati* on *Brahmasūtra* 1.4.21, *ibid.*, p.416.
27. *Bhāmati* on *Brahmasūtra* 1.4.22, *ibid.*, p.416-417.
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## Second Chapter

### Brief view on *Mahāvākyas*

#### Section-I

##### What is *Mahāvākyā*?

We came to know from our previous discussion that one of the cardinal doctrines of the *Advaita Vedānta* is *jīva* and *Brahman* are identical and *mahāvākyas* are those special magnificent pronouncements of *Upaniṣads*, which reveal the identity between *jīva* and *Brahman* very explicitly. *Mahāvākyā* does not mean a big sentence or a difficult sentence but it is great because of its subject content. *Mahāvākyas* are such sentences which profound the most essential doctrine of the *Vedānta* i.e. the identity of *jīva* and *Brahman*. They assure us what our essential nature is. Even it is said that the entire *Vedic* lore is meant only to serve elucidation and application of these sayings. The *Advaita* system of thought is contained in four great sayings. *Mahāvākyas* are latent enshrined in the heart of each of the four *Vedas*. If the *Vedas* be compared to a tree and the *Upaniṣads* to its fruits, the *mahāvākyas* can be characterized as the juice of the fruits.<sup>1</sup>

*Mahāvākyā* is a compound of words-‘*mahat*’ means great and ‘*vākya*’ the form of the root ‘*vāc*’ means to speak. Hence, literally *mahāvākyā* means great pronouncement or great sentence. For a grammarian, a *mahāvākyā* is opposed to *laghuvākyā*, is a sentence with a very large number of words. For a *Vedāntins*, *mahāvākyā* is great in meaning. *Mahāvākyas* constitute the essence of the *Upaniṣadic* teachings. The *Advaitins* believe that the principle doctrine of the *Upaniṣads* is that of the identity between the *jīva* and *Brahman*. To emphasize the importance of these utterances Sarvajñātma Muni says-

“*Binā mahāvākyamto na kaścīt pumāṁsam advaitamvaiti jantuḥ*”/<sup>2</sup>

It means none can realize the ‘*Advaita*’ without knowing the purport of these great utterances. There are four *Vedas* and one statement from each *Veda* signifies the identity of *jīva* and *Brahman*. Under each of the four *Vedas*, there is one such sentence in a particular *Upaniṣad* of the *Veda*. What is important to note is that in the *Vedānta* four *mahāvākyas* are acknowledged in accordance with the four *Vedas*. They are-

<i>Mahāvākyā</i>	<i>Veda</i>	<i>Upaniṣad</i>
<i>Prajñānaṁ Brahman</i>	<i>Ṛgveda</i>	<i>Aitareya Upaniṣad</i> (3/1/3)
<i>Tattvamasi</i>	<i>Sāmaveda</i>	<i>Chāndogya</i> <i>Upaniṣad</i> (6/8/7)
<i>Aham Brahmāsmi</i>	<i>Yajurveda</i>	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka</i> <i>Upaniṣad</i> (1/4/10)
<i>Ayamātmā Brahman</i>	<i>Atharvaveda</i>	<i>Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad</i> (2)

*Prajñānaṁ Brahman* is known as the *Ṛgvedic mahāvākyā* as it is present the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* under the *Ṛgveda*. *Aham Brahmāsmi* is known as the *Yajurvedic mahāvākyā* as it is found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* under the *Śukla Yajurveda*. *Tattvamasi* is known as the *Sāmavedic mahāvākyā* as it situated in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* under *Sāmaveda*. *Ayamātmā Brahman*, which enshrined in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* under *Atharvaveda*, is known as the *Atharvavedic mahāvākyā*. All these four statements declare the same truth namely the identity between the self and *Brahman*. Each of them has two words. At least one of them signifies the individual self and

the other Universal Self. When the *upādhis*<sup>3</sup> like *avidyā* are abandoned there remains only Pure Consciousness.

All the *mahāvākyas* declare the same truth namely the oneness of *jīva* and *Brahman*. Now the question arises: if the knowledge of the identity between *jīva* and *Brahman* is grasped from any one of the four *mahāvākyas* then what is the necessity of accepting four instead of one? Prof. Tapan Kr. Chakraborty in his article “*Mahāvākyas in Advaita Vedānta*”<sup>4</sup> proposed some arguments-

In Indian tradition, there exists a conception of *adhikārīveda*. Being acquired the eligibility in one of the *Vedas* one can acquire the identity knowledge from that respective *Veda* only. As per example, a *Ṛgvedic adhikārī* can acquire the identity knowledge from the *Ṛgvedic mahāvākya* easily. However, he may fail to attain any access to the other *Vedas* besides his own. It occurs similarly in the case with the respective *Vedas*. If there had been one *mahāvākya* in one *Veda* then others might have been fail to attain the identity knowledge. For this reason, different types of *mahāvākyas* are considered for different *adhikārī* in different *Vedas*. However, all four of them echo the same truth- *jīva-Brahman* identity.

Śaṅkara in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* raised same problem in different manner. When all the four *sūtras* of *Brahmasūtra* are able to reveal the intension of the *mahāvākya* then what is the necessity for latter elaboration? Śaṅkara resolved the problem by suggesting that though it is possible for an *uttamadhikārī* to acquire knowledge out of the understanding of the four but there are feeble minded persons for whom repetition and elaboration is urgent. That is why Vedavyāsa introduced fifth *adhikaraṇa* instead of the four *sūtras*. It is also true for the *mahāvākyas*. Prof Chakraborty in a similar manner concluded that the second or third or fourth *mahāvākya* is



urgent for whose identity knowledge does not get deep-rooted from the first, second or third *mahāvākyas*.

The *Muktikopaniṣad* declared that emancipation might possible only through the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*. However, if a disciple fails to acquire emancipation from this *Upaniṣad* then he may go through the other *Upaniṣads* like *Īśa*, *Katha*, *Kena* etc. However, if the person failed to attain emancipation again then he may go through thirty-two *Upaniṣads*. Again fail to produce emancipation then he should go through hundred and eight *Upaniṣads*.<sup>5</sup> Likewise, if one fails to attain identity knowledge from the one *mahāvākya* then he may go through second, third, or fourth *mahāvākyas*.

*Ātmatattva* is very difficult to understand. That is why *ātmatattva* had advised in different manner repeatedly in the *Bhāgavadgītā*. Similarly, since identity knowledge is very difficult to understand the *mahāvākya* does not limit in one.

Though traditionally the *māhāvakyas* are limited four in number from the four *Vedas* but there are many *abhedavākyas* i.e. sentences teaching non-difference. We may call them as *mahāvākyas* because they also convey the same message. In his interpretation on the *Vedāntasāra* Jacob told about eleven *mahāvākyas* which he had found from a manuscript copy of the *Mahāvākyavivaraṇa*.<sup>6</sup> They are-

- “*tattvamasi*”
- “*aham brahmāsmi*”
- “*ayamātma brahma*”
- “*eṣa ca ātmāntaryāmyamṛtaḥ*”
- “*sa yaścāyam puruṣa yaścā sāvāditye saekah*”
- “*prajñānam Brahman*”

- “*viṣṇānam ānandaṁ Brahman*”
- “*satyam jñānāmanantam Brahman*”
- “*sa ebameba puruṣo Brahman*”
- “*sarvam khalu idam Brahman*”
- “*ekamevadiṭīyam*”

## Section-II

### Brief description about the famous four

*Prajñānaṁ Brahman*: *Prajñānaṁ Brahman* or consciousness is *Brahman* is the essence of the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* of the *Ṛgveda*. It is the indicator of *svarūpa* or the real nature of ultimate reality. The *Upaniṣad* starts by telling us that before creation there was the Self or *ātman* alone. The Self then thought and creation starts. The *Upaniṣad* goes on to explain the creation process in detail. The *Upaniṣad* tells us that everything is equated with *prajñā* or Pure Consciousness and the world should be seen through the eyes of Pure Consciousness and everything is Pure Consciousness alone. The *Advaitins* believe that the Supreme Reality of a transcendental principle of Pure Consciousness is the underlying principle, which can explain all the facts of our experience. Here the word ‘*prajñānam*’ indicates the consciousness and sense organs function only because of it. As per example, the *Upaniṣad* clearly declares that the sense of sight perceives objects, the sense of hearing hears sounds, the sense of smell perceives odour the sense of speech does its acts, the sense of taste takes the taste because of its power. Even our experience of reasoning, recalling, memory, love or hatred, desire, feeling etc also take place this inner conjunction of body, mind and self. Though the consciousness does not directly perceive, see or hear yet it is responsible for all the sensory operations. Actually, the immutable intelligence, untouched and unattached *kūṭasthacaitanya*,<sup>7</sup> is at the back of all experience.

The word '*Brahman*' signifies the intelligence, which is identical with all creatures. The *brahmān*, *indra*, *prajāpati*, other gods, earth, water, fire, ether, air these five great elements, all small creatures, the seeds of creation like egg born, sweat born, sprout born, horses, cows, men, elephants and even whatever moves, breaths, flies –all these are guided by intelligence. Intelligence is the basis of all of them and intelligence is *Brahman*. The same intelligence lies in all creatures. The *Aitareya Upaniṣad* declares the essence, the invariable element pervading all living beings is the Universal *Brahman* and it remains manifested in this world.<sup>8</sup>

*Brahman* or attribute less Pure Consciousness is untained, calm, self-content, non-dual, transcendental. It becomes when conditioned by the limitations of name and form, the omniscient God or *Īśvara*, the cause of the manifestation of the entire universe, where all created beings obtain their enjoyments. Being Inner Controller of all it is known as the *Antaryāmin*. Being associated with the Cosmic Intelligence, which is the seed of the tangible universe it is called as *Hiraṇyagarbha*. Being conditioned by the totality of all bodies and born from the Cosmic Egg it is known as *Virāt* and being associated with the names of fire, speech, etc. it becomes the *Devas*. In the same way, when associated with various bodies, ranging from the body of *Brahmā*, the Creator, to that of an insect, *Brahman* is known through different names and forms. *Śruti* declared that one being that is beyond all conditioning is described in various ways by different thinkers as it is conveyed by their minds.

As consciousness, *Brahman* exists in each and every individual. Individual self is only an abridgement of the *Brahman*. This is clearly expressed in the *Upaniṣadic* dictum *Prajñānaṁ Brahman*. After the declaration *Prajñānaṁ Brahman* the *Upaniṣad* uttered –“*sa eten prajñānen ātmanā...sarvān kāmānāptvā amṛtaḥ sambhabat*”. The knower becomes immortal through

consciousness. In the fifth chapter of the book *Pañcadaśī*, namely *Mahāvākyavivekḥ*, Vidyāraṇya tried to fill the gap between these two passages by adding-when we know that consciousness pervading everything is *Brahman* then obviously, the consciousness pervading myself is none other than *Brahman*. In his words-“*caturmukhendra deveṣu manuṣyā-śva-gavādiṣu/caitanyamekaṁ brahmātaḥ prajñānam brahma mayyapi*”// (*Pañcadaśī*-5.2). No doubt ‘*Prajñānam Brahman*’ is one of the best definitions of *Brahman* because it gives the expression to its supra essential essence.

*Tattvamasi*: The *mahāvākya* of the *Sāmveda*, which is declared in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, is *Tattvamasi*. It is *upadeśavākya* or instruction of statement from the *guru* to disciple. It declares nine times in section 8-16 of the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. *Tattvamasi* occurs in the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* in the discourse of Uddālaka to his son Śvetaketu. The discourse follows as below: once being asked by his father Uddālaka, Śvetaketu went to *gurukula* (one kind of ancient education centre) at the age of twelve years. After completing his studies he came back home with an air of all knowing superiority. In spite of his twelve years, studies he failed to realize the purport of the *Vedic* knowledge. However, being a proud lad he started to think that he had everything. His father, Uddālaka understood the pride in his son and tried to rectify him. He asked --by which the unheard is heard, the unthought of is thought of, the unknown is known, by knowing which everything becomes known.<sup>9</sup> Being failed to answer this question, Śvetaketu surrendered to his father. Then Uddālaka answered that by one clod of clay or by one nugget of gold or by one pair of nail scissors, all that were made of clay, of gold, or of iron could be respectively known. In every case the modification being merely a name, arising from speech while the clay, gold or iron along being the truth.<sup>10</sup> What is he had tried to establish was that world is names and forms of *Brahman*, names and forms were illusions and

reality is *Brahman* alone. Here the meaning of ‘*Tat*’ is *Īśvara* with all pervasiveness and all knowing quality, and the direct meaning of ‘*tvam*’ is *jīva* with limited pervasiveness and limited knowing. Here the verb ‘*asi*’ means identity. ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ endowed with contrary characteristics cannot be considered to be identical in a literal sense. Supreme self and individual self –the ocean and well cannot be identical. The identity that is being spoken of here is from the standpoint of implied sense. However, this is impossible if direct. In our next chapter, we try to expound how the *Advaitins* establish this and others try to explain it different ways. We also try to explain metaphysical significance of *Tattvamasi*.

*Aham Brahmāsmi*: *Yajurvedic mahāvākya*, ‘*Aham Brahmāsmi*’ or I am *Brahman* enshrined in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. It is the indicator of the direct realization of the identity of the individual self and *Brahman* and the indwelling self are identical. It signifies that the self-luminous, all pervading *Brahman* is directly experienced as the inmost self of all beings. The all-pervading self, *Brahman* as *ātman* remains hidden in the innermost recess of our heart. As *ātman*, *Brahman* is the eye of the eye ear of the ear speech of the speech, mind of the mind. The difference between *Brahman* and *ātman* is only in name and not in essence. *Ṛṣi* Vāmadeva having realized the truth declared ‘*Aham Brahmāsmi*’. Here the word ‘*aham*’ indicates the self, which is by nature infinite and all pervasive. It is the witnessing consciousness standing apart from the intellect, ego –principle and shines through every act of thinking, feeling etc. which remains as the witnessing principle of the functions of the intellect in all being such as men and others. The word ‘*Brahman*’ indicates the same reality which is unconditioned by the empirical categories like space, time etc. and the verb ‘*asmi*’ implies the relation of the identity between the self and *Brahman*. Actually being the same in all the witness-consciousness is universal and

cannot be distinguished from *Brahman* at all. It does not signify any empirical relation between the two separate entities, but only affirms the non duality of essence.<sup>11</sup>

The innermost self was indeed *Brahman* in the beginning. It is realized as ‘I am *Brahman*’. It becomes all. Whoever among the *gods* having this enlightenment became that *Brahman*. Again, it is the same with the seers and the same with human beings. Ṛṣi Vāmdeva having realized the truth announced that ‘I was manu and the sun’. Similarly, whoever in a like manner knows the Self, as ‘I am *Brahman*’ becomes this entire universe. When the seeker realizes that the *ātman* his or her inmost self, is also *Brahman*, the self of all and as the knower of *Brahman* he or she becomes *Brahman*. Yogī Yajñāvalkya pointed out that when any person or thing is dear to us it is not because of the person or thing rather it because of his *ātman*, the common inmost self of all beings and things. Being immortal indwelling spirit, the self-alone is real. It alone exists. It is the reality of all realities, existence of all existence.

*Ayam ātma Brahman*: *Ayam ātma Brahman* or this self is *Brahman* is the *mahāvākya* of the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* of the *Atharvaveda*. Here the word ‘*ayam*’ refers to the self-luminous and immediately cognizable and non-mediate nature of the self, which is internal to everything from the *ahamkāra* or ego down to the physical body. It is the witness-intelligence, inner-ruler immortal.

The word ‘*Brahman*’ refers to both reality, which is the substance out of which all things are really made. Because of self-luminosity, non-relativity and universality *ātma* and *Brahman* are the same. This identification is not any of bringing together the two different entities but it is an affirmation that absoluteness includes every thing and there is no other entity except *Brahman*.<sup>12</sup>

Here the *Upaniṣad* conveys the idea that the indwelling self of the heart is none other than the

all-pervading Universal Self, which is known as *Brahman*. *Ātman* and *Brahman* are only two names for the same entity. The existence of the self is not dependent on anything and it exists whether we are aware of it or not.

Opponent may ask that if the idea of ‘*aham*’ is given up in the dictum ‘*Aham Brahmāsmi*’ then how can the identification be possible? Vidyāraṇya in the seventh chapter of *Pañcadaśī* clearly explained the process of elimination. Here the word ‘I’ means spirit with ego, which circumscribed in the body. The ego is rejected and the spirit is identified with the all-pervading spirit. As per example when a pot is destroyed, the ether in it becomes one with the all-pervading ether.<sup>13</sup>

Now we may conclude that each *mahāvākyas* claimed that the identity of individual and *Brahman*. This never brings something new but through them the veil of nescience is eradicated and self-luminous *ātman* becomes immediate. *Prajñānaṁ Brahman* is the definition of the Ultimate Truth. This is followed by the *upadeśavākya*, ‘*Tat tvam asi*’. Having heard, this *upadeśa* (advice) the aspirant does reflect and contemplate and comes to realize the Truth i.e., ‘*Aham Brahmāsmi*’. Because of this realization, he goes to the teacher and says ‘*Ayamātmā Brahman*’. Each *mahāvākyas* proclaim that the identity of individual and *Brahman*. They never bring something new but through them, the veil of nescience is eradicated and the self-luminous *ātmā* becomes immediate. The *Mahāvākyas* are essential to realize the most hidden truth. Prof. Hiriyanṇa explained this truth with the help of the example of solar eclipse.<sup>14</sup> During the time of solar eclipse there is actually no change occurs in the sun yet it seems eclipsed because the moon intervene it. When this obstacle is removed the sun again visible as before. No doubt, the great sayings remove the ignorance of self.

### Section-III

#### Uddālaka's advice to Śvetaketu and the nine analogies

Theory of identity of the individual self and the Supreme Self is enshrined in the *Upaniṣadic* statement *Tattvamasi* and further illustrated through a series of examples. The first analogy is of a bird tied with a string flies in various directions but at last finding no resting place anywhere settles down at the place where it is bound. Similarly, the individual self, which is limited by the mind, moves about in various directions during the walking and dream states. The mind experiences pleasure and pain actuated by desires and actions based on ignorance during these states. Having found no resting place, anywhere at last in deep sleep settles down at *prāṇa* which is the Supreme Deity of being and it is foundation of all causes and effects. Therefore, the individual self settles down in the Supreme Self.<sup>15</sup> Śvetaketu fails to grasp the meaning hidden in this analogy. Then Uddālaka explains the truth through another analogy. Śvetaketu is still unable to understand. Therefore, his father Uddālaka gives another example.

The second example refers to the juice of various flowers in honey. Going around to different flowers bees collect pollen from many different flowers and put into together to produce honey. By collecting the pollen of flowers located at different trees and reduces them to one form to make honey. However, no one can distinguish from which a particular drop of honey come from? The pollen has been mixed together to make the honey. These juices do not conscious of their separate identities thinking 'I am the juice from such and such trees'. Similarly, during the deep sleep all the creatures reach Supreme Being but them never conscious of having reached the Supreme Being. Without being conscious of their own selves, they reach their Supreme Being. They do not think that though coming from different sources that they all are one with the



self.<sup>16</sup> Śvetaketu is still unable to understand. Rivers which belonging to the east run to the east and which belong to the west run to the west. They arise from the sea, finally go back to the sea, and finally become one with it. Śaṅkara in his commentary explained that seawater becomes vapour which rises and forms into clouds. Clouds go over the land and pour down as rain, which goes into rivers and at last run into the sea. Though the sea is the source of the rivers but the rivers do not know the truth. Just as these rivers reach the sea they become unaware of their separate identities like ‘I am this river’ or ‘I am that river’. Having lost their separate identities they become one with the sea. A drop of water never claims that ‘I am the *Gangā* or I am the *Jamunā*’. Similarly, all these creatures come from the Supreme Self but being unconscious that they are coming from the Supreme Self.<sup>17</sup> Then Uddālaka adopts the easier method.

The fourth example is of the tree being cut. According to the *Vedic* teachers, trees are endowed with consciousness. If someone may strike at the root, in the middle or on the top of a tree but the tree is still living as the living self pervades it. It surely dies when the living self departs from it. He tells Śvetaketu that he is that very Self. Leaving some, work unfinished when a man has fallen as sleep the leaving self does not die and normally when he wakes up he can remember that he had left some unfinished work. When the living self does not die it only leaves an abode, which it had previously occupied. The instances of deep sleep and death show that the living self does not cease to exist even when the body remains unconscious or dies. This living self is that of Supreme Self.<sup>18</sup> Śvetaketu is still be wildered at this truth.

The fifth analogy is of the *nyagrodha* fruit. On breaking the *nyagrodha* seed, one does not see the subtle essence but it is there all the same. It is from the subtle essence that this mighty tree grows. Similarly, this gross universe with all its name and form arises from the subtle essence of

Pure Being. *Ātman* is subtle like this essence and ‘that you are.’<sup>19</sup> In the thirteenth section of this *Upaniṣad* produces another example of salt dissolved in water. Uddālaka states when the salt is diluted in water, the water becomes salty but the salt is not perceived. In the same manner, the *Ātman* pervades our bodies like the salt. However, salt does not perceive by sight or touch in this water one does not perceive the Pure Being, which is the cause of the body. If one tasted the water, any one can find that it tastes salty through out. Similarly, self exists but we fail to realize it.<sup>20</sup>

The *Upaniṣad* in the fourteenth section introduces the analogy of the traveler and blind one. A man was tied by robbers and was left alone with his eyes bound up, in the forest, while he was leaving for *gāndhara* country. A kindhearted competent person makes him free and directs him to *gāndhara* so that he may reach his destination safely. The self by ignorance is thrown into the dark forests of *saṃsāra*. By the instruction of a competent person, he practices and then he realizes *Brahman*. The ego is carried away by thieves in the shape of virtue, vice etc. from pure being into the forest of mundane world. Due to his past good deeds, he finds a sympathetic competent person who knows the true nature of the Self. The competent person instructs him about the way of recognising the discrepancies of this world. The ego of that person loss all affection for mundane objects and instructions like... ‘you are not of the world, the son etc., do not belong to you, you are Pure Being...,’ helps him to remove the bondage of illusion and realize the true Self of Being.<sup>21</sup>

The eighth analogy is of the sickman on his deathbed. When a person is dying, it is common for his relatives to gather round at the deathbed and ask the person ‘do you recognize me?’ So long as the dying person’s speech does not merge with his mind, his mind with his *prāṇa*, his *prāṇa*

with the heat in his body, and the heat with the Supreme Self, he will be able to recognize them. The *Upaniṣad* utters that from the self comes heat, from the heat comes *prāṇa*, from *prāṇa* comes the mind and from the mind comes speech. At the time of death, these things go back in the reverse order. Speech goes back into the mind...etc. and the resting place is the Self i.e. Pure Being. This is the method of reaching Pure Being. According to Śamkara this instance try to answer the question as to in what manner the knower of *Brahman* reaches it.<sup>22</sup>

The ninth example is that of a man accused of theft and ordered to a trial by true ordeal. In ancient days, there was a test. A heated axe put it against the hand of this suspect. If this hand was burnt then he was indicated as theft. However, if his hand was not burnt then he was considered as innocent as he was protected and covered by truth. Similarly one who have no self-knowledge he will continue to burn in his world. Being attached to the unrealities of modifications returns repeatedly in accordance with his actions. However, the one who have attained the self-knowledge he will be liberated and do not have to continue in this circle of birth and death (and never come back to this world). According to Śamkara, the power of truth makes one free.<sup>23</sup>

This method of explaining the truth gradually is an ideal process of teaching. The analogies used here are of great significance. The example of bees show the oneness of *ātman*, the example of rivers is very significant in telling that *ātman* is the source of all beings. The example of the *nyagrodha* tree and salt are exemplified to show the all pervasiveness of *ātman*. The fruit of *nyagrodha* tree signifies the very much subtlety of *Brahman*. The experience of absoluteness arises after the complete understanding of *Tattvamasi*. All these examples elucidate the relation of identity hidden in the nutshell *Tattvamasi*. Before receiving the instruction from his father,

Śvetaketu did not know that the self is Pure Being, the self of all, neither a cause nor an effect. Having been taught by his father through reasoning and illustrations, Śvetaketu realizes that the inner essence of everything is identical with Supreme Being.

#### Section-IV

##### The philosophical significance of the repetition

In the beginning of this discourse, Uddālaka asked Śvetaketu whether he had known that teaching by which unheard is heard, the unthought-of is thought of, and the unknown is known. Śvetaketu asked how, in what way can there be such an instruction? Uddālaka explained the essence of the truth by citing three innovative examples. He argued how by *mṛtpiṇḍa* or one clod of clay, *lohamāṇi* or one nugget of gold or *nakhnikmtana* or one pair of nail-scissor all that had been made of clay, gold or iron could be respectively known, as the modification in each case was merely a name only the clay, gold or iron alone are reality. In reality, the only reality is *Brahman*.<sup>24</sup>

While explaining the meaning of the aphorism “*liṅgātca*” (*Brahmasūtra* 4.1.2) Śaṅkara introduces an opponent’s view that repetition may hold good when some excellence can be produced. However, what purpose can be served by the repetition in respect of meditations where even a single mental act about the Supreme *Brahman* calls up the eternally free, pure, intelligent Supreme *Brahman* which is identical with one one’s own self. If the hearing of such dictum like *Tattvamasi* once only does not produce the realization of the *jīva-Brahman* identity, then how can it be expected that even a repetition of that text will produce it? Again, one may argue that a mere sentence fails to produce the direct perception of anything and hence that

dictum helped by reasoning will generate the realization of the identity of the self and *Brahman*. Even so, this reasoning might also lead to perception of its object after a single application. Therefore, repetition will become futile.<sup>25</sup>

Now one can argue that reasoning and text can only produce a knowledge of the general features of the object, but not so of its special features. As per example, one feel pain in the heart, and for such symptoms as the contortion of the body, another person can only feel in a general way that there is a pain in his heart but never realizes the pain like the suffering man. Since an intimate knowledge, leads to the removal of ignorance hence the repetition is needed for fulfill that purpose.<sup>26</sup>

Opponent may argue that intimate knowledge may not arise even if that much is done repeatedly. A special aspect that cannot be known from the scripture and reasoning at the first instance, can never be known after reciting to them a hundred times. There whether it may be the intimate knowledge or the general knowledge that is generated by the scriptures and reasoning, it must be grasped at the very first glance. Thus, that repetition has no place. Here the simple answer is – some divergent intelligent people may not have any intimate knowledge at the very first glance. Opponent further argued that a thing might possess common and peculiar features. Here may be a scope of repetition inasmuch as a man grasps only one feature at one attempt, and other at subsequent attempts as per example, in the case of reading a long chapter. However, it is not reasonable that there should be any urgency for repetition for realization *Brahman* or comprehending *jīva-Brahman* identity that are without common and peculiar features. According to Śaṅkara, repetition will become unnecessary for such person who can realize the *jīva Brahman* identity after hearing *Tattvamasi* once only but for one who cannot do so, repetition is

necessary. Thus, we find in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* that Uddālaka advised his son Śvetaketu ‘that thou art’ being humbly asked by his son repeatedly. Uddālaka as a teacher tried to remove the respective cause of Śvetaketu’s misconceptions and teaches that very truth *Tattvamasi* repeatedly. It is our common experience that though the meanings may be vaguely grasped from a sentence instructed only by once, people grasped it fully removing the false conception standing in the way through a process of repetition.<sup>27</sup> Śruti assured us by citing the text-“it is to be heard of, reflected on, and meditated upon.”(*Br.Up.4.5.6*). Opponent argued from the beginning that if the text *Tattvamasi* uttered once cannot bring about a realization of its meaning, then it will not be able to do so even when repeated. That problem does not arise, for nothing is illogical about facts directly perceived. It is a matter of our common experience that though the meaning may be vaguely grasped from a single utterance. We grasp it after fully removing the false notions in the way through the process of sustained consideration. Moreover, the dictum *Tattvamasi* speaks of the identity of the entity denoted by ‘thou’ with the unity denoted by ‘that’. The word ‘*Tat*’ denotes the supreme *Brahman* under discussion, which is existence, the witness and the cause of birth etc. of the universe. The very nature of *Brahman* is well known to the people who are adepts in evident it may produce, as “*Brahman* is truth, knowledge and infinite” (*Tai.Up.2.1.1*) knowledge bliss *Brahman* (*Br.Up.3.10.28*).

This immutable is never seen, but it is the witness. It is never known but is the knower, (*Br.Up.3.8.2*) beyond the circle of birth and death, neither gross, nor minute, neither short nor long (*Br.Up.3.8.8*). The word ‘*Tat*’ denotes the Supreme *Brahman*, which is free from all mundane attributes, and which is consciousness is well known to them who are adepts in the *Upaniṣads*. The inmost self of the disciple, is the meaning of the word ‘*tvam*’, which is the seer, hearer, inmost entity inhabiting the sheaths starting from the gross body, and which ascertained

as consciousness itself. As the meaning of a sentence is dependent on the meaning of the words constituting it, the dictum *Tattvamasi* fails to produce the direct realization of its meaning of those types of people to whom these two entities generally remain obstructed by ignorance doubts and confusion. For them it becomes desirable to recite repeated to the scriptures and reasoning that bring to a clarification of the concepts.<sup>28</sup>

Self is part less, but many constituents are superimposed on it like body, sense, organs, mind, intellect, perception of objects etc. in this situation one false constituent would be disappeared at one-step of knowledge and other at another next stop. Therefore, the dawn of a conception in progressive manner becomes justifiable.

On the other hand, some sharp intellectuals have no obstruction like ignorance, doubt, confusion etc; can realize the meaning of *Tattvamasi*. No doubt, reflection in such cases is useless. Because the knowledge of the self emerges, once then, it is able to remove ignorance and therefore any progressive development is useless.

On the other hand, who does not realize this truth promptly; this repetition is needed for bringing about the realization, but who does not realize this repetition is a necessity for bringing about the realization. Even the teacher however should not distract him from understanding of the text *Tattvamasi* in order to direct him to mere repetition, for nobody marries his daughter to a bridegroom for killing him. It is desirable that efforts must be made to fix his mind more and more on the meaning of the text. Therefore, the scriptural passages recommended the repeated practice of meditation. For the man who is dull of intellect and discards the meaning of a sentence just because it is not obvious to him it is admitted.<sup>29</sup>

## Section-V

### Canon of interpretation

The instruction of “*sa ātmā tattvamasi Śvetaketu*” in the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is advised nine times –for establishing one and the same *vidyā* i.e. *ātmaikatva-vidyā*. A critical method of judging the purport of the philosophical discussion was well known to the philosophers. It is generally said that the *Mīmāṃsakas* had introduced the process of interpreting the scriptural texts. The method of interpretation has found in the following verse-

*Upakramopasaṁhāra abhyāso apūrvata phalam/*

*Arthavādopapattī ca liṅgam tatparya nirṇaye// (Bṛhatsaṁhitā)*

It means the significance of the Vedic dictum *Tattvamasi* can be understood six marks. Sadānanda Yogīndra explains this theory through the verse one by one. Technically, which helps to understand the secret meaning of each *mahāvākya* lies in the knowledge of *jīva-Brahman* identity. Sadānanda tries to explain how the determination of secret meaning can be obtained through six *lingas*.

Śaṁkara’s interpretation of the aphorism “*anyāt iti cet sadavadharanat*”(3.3.17) deals with the rules of *upakrama-upasaṁhāra* on account of the import of *Tattvamasi*.<sup>30</sup> In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* commencement is made thus way-“*soumyedmagra āsīd ekamadvitīyam*”(6.2.1)-“o amenable one, in the beginning, all this was but Existence one without a second”. Here the word ‘*ātman*’ is not used, but the identity of the individual self and *Brahman* is thought at the end, in ever memorable words ‘*Tat tvam asi*’. Now one may doubt about that these scriptural texts have the same meaning or not?



Opponent asked that the conclusion must be accord with the commencement. Therefore, it can be considered that this is only a fanciful conceit of identity.<sup>31</sup> However, this objection is useless. The scriptural text utters “*sad avadhāraṇa*”. Here ‘*sat*’ confirms the meaning of the term ‘*ātman*’. *Ātman* is enshrined in the term ‘*sat*’. Not only that, the sense is asserted in the following texts-

“...that by knowing which, the unheard becomes heard, the unthought becomes thought, and the unknown becomes known” (*Ch.Up.6.1.1*)/... “...by the knowledge of one everything becomes known”... “...this universe, my child, was in the beginning as existence” (*Ch.Up.6.2.1*).<sup>32</sup>

From all these it proves that the Supreme Self is meant in the text under discussion. Hence, it is only from the point of view of the assertion of the identity of the individual self and *Brahman*, that one can reconcile all such facts in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* as the assertion of oneness. Before creation, reference to the individual being by the term ‘*ātman*’, statement of attaining the nature of *ātman* in deep sleep and the definite declaration of identity by the text ‘that thou art’ made again and again in response to the repeated inquiry.

The opponent argued that the conclusion must be in conformity with what is said in the beginning. It should be noticed that in the present case neither *ātman* nor *anātman* is mentioned in the beginning. It is a general statement of *sat* which is not only contradicted by a specific conclusion rather it requires such a conclusion which satisfy the enquiries about the *sat*. Besides the meaning of the term, ‘*sat*’ cannot be other than the Supreme Self. Since all other things are unreal by reasons of having their origin in speech etc., it may be said that a difference in scriptural passages cannot give rise to a difference in purport. As per example, “you fetch the

vessel” indicates the same meaning as “this vessel you fetch”. Therefore, the conclusion is that process of expounding may differ in passages of the same class but the purport does not differ.<sup>33</sup>

The second *liṅga* is called *abhyāsa* or repetition. It means repetition through recitation. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* the ‘*Tat tvam asi*’ had been repeatedly advised nine times to bring out the intended meaning of *Śruti* as one of the identity of the *jīva* and *Brahman*. There is a repetition of the same idea throughout the chapter. *Abhyāsa* is the frequent repetition of *Tattvamasi* in order to produce a deep impression in his mind.

The third *liṅga* is *apūrvatā*. *Brahman* or *jīva-Brahman* identity is knowable only through *Upaniṣads* or *Vedas*. Being inaccessible to any other *pramāṇa* than the *Śruti* *apūrvatā* consists in *Brahman*. That who’s meaning is not grasped by any of the six accepted *pramāṇas* except the *aupaniṣadic vākya* is no doubt the true significance of *apūrvatā*. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* declares that- “*tvaṁ tau aupaniṣadam puruṣam pr̥cchāmi*”/ (3.9.28). The author of the *Subodhinī*, famous gloss of the book *Vedāntasāra* uttered an alternative explanation of *apūrvatā*. As *Brahman* is self-luminous, therefore it needs nothing for his luminosity. Here lies the *apūrvatā*.

The fourth *liṅga* is *phala* which is explained in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*- ‘*ācāryavān puruṣo veda, tasya tavadeva ciraṁ yavanna vimokṣa atha samppatsye*’ (6.14.12). The disciple who goes to an *ācārya* and hears the secret meaning from him realises the true nature of his self and attains the identity of *jīva-Brahman*.

The next *liṅga* is *arthavāda*, which stands for praise. In the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, this *arthavāda* is uttered in the following manner- “*uta tamadesamaprakaṣaḥ yena*

*aśrutam śrutam bhavati, amatam matam, avijñātam vijñātam*” (6.1.3). It means-...by hearing which, what is not heard is heard, what is not thought is thought, what is not known is known.

The last *liṅga* is *upapatti*, which literally means reasoning. Establishing the same truth i.e. *jīva Brahman* identity are also stated in several places like-

‘*yathā saumya eken mṛtpiṇḍena sarvam mṛnnmayam vijñātam syāt*’(6.1.4)

Just as by knowing one lamp of clay, all the products that constitute of clay (such as *ghata*, *śarāva* etc) would become known, the products depend only on name, while clay alone is the reality. Similarly, all the objects of the world would to be known if we able to know *Brahman*, as the cause of the world. All the products of clay are mere names, have no independent entity apart from clay. Clay remains at the end and nothing else. Similarly, consciousness remains at the end and nothing else. Consciousness remains at the end and all its *vikāras* or forms as if mountains, rivers etc. are mere names only. Therefore, this type of reasoning unveils the hidden true.

Now we can conclude that all the cannons of interpretation establish that the *Vedāntic* dictum *Tattvamasi*-unveils the theory of absolute identity of the individual self and the supreme *Brahman*.

## Section-VI

Is *Tattvamasi* mere an *arthavāda*?

Whether *Tattvamasi*, the *mahāvākya* would be considered as mere praise or *arthavāda*? This question had been well discussed in *Vidvanmanorañjinī*, the famous gloss of the book *Vedāntasāra*. Before following Rāmatirtha’s arguments, we at first are going to write few lines

about *arthavāda*. Next, we will see whether it might be considered as an *arthavāda* or not? *Vaidikavākyas* are of five kinds in number. They are *vidhi*, *mantra*, *arthavāda*, *niṣedha*, *nāmdheya*. On them *arthavāda* is generally divided into two types as-eulogy and censure. Thus, *arthavāda* is supplementary or complementary to *vidhi* and *niṣedha*.

The *Mīmāṃsakas* claim that the entire *Veda* must in one way or another way lead to *dharma* or be connected with *dharma* i.e. *yāgādi*. We know that the primary sense of an *arthavāda* is either praise or censure.<sup>34</sup> Now the question arises that praise or censure which are conveyed by the *arthavāda*, has no direct connection with *dharma*. As a result, there will arise the contingency of its purposeness. Bhāskara in his “*Arthasaṃgraha*” assured us that *arthavāda* ultimately leads to *dharma* indirectly by taking the help of *lakṣaṇā*. As per example “*vāyu* is the swiftest deity.” The primary sense of this sentence has nothing to do with *dharma*. Therefore, *lakṣaṇā* is admitted here to establish its purpose “*vāyabyam śvetam ālabheta*” or ‘one who desirous of prosperity should immolate or slaughter a white animal in honour of *vāyu*’. No doubt, it is *Vaidika* injunction. “*Vāyu* is swiftest deity” is attached to this injunction. Whosoever pleases him with his proper oblation, he confers prosperity. Now, this praise of *vāyu*, which forms the primary sense of *arthavāda*, has no direct connection with *dharma* or the sacrifice of a white animal, whose slaughter is laid down by injunction. In this way, the *arthavāda* conveys the praise of *vidheya* and is consequently connected with *dharma*. As the *arthavāda* teaches the praise of a matter to be enjoined, it has a purpose in the *Mīmāṃsakas* scheme of things. Therefore, *arthavāda* conveys the praise or censure of something, which is enjoined or prohibited. No doubt, it is the subsidiary or complementary to (*seṣa*) *vidhi* and *niṣedha*. *Tattvamasi* is not a remnant (*seṣa* or *anga*) of something. No *vidhi* is indicated by this *mahāvākya*, and hence it cannot be reduced to *arthavāda*. We do not find any other principle sentence, which is its *angī*.

In *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, *Tattvamasi* is uttered nine times. If it had been mere praise, then repetition of this expression would be superfluous. Indicating to a minister of a king one may say he is king. Though the minister is not really a king, he may behave like a real king. Here the word king has been used for minister secondarily. Similarly, though the *jīva* is very different from *Brahman*, knowing the fact one may use the expression ‘*tvam*’ ‘*Tat*’ –only in a secondary sense. To brush away such opponent Rāmatīrtha argued that being fully concern of the distinction *rājā* and *rājapuruṣa* a word is used secondarily. However, in the case of *Tattvamasi* we are not concern of the distinction consciousness exists in both *jīva* and *Brahman*. We do not have the knowledge of difference between the meaning of *caitanya* indicating by the word ‘*Tat*’ and the meaning the *caitanya* denoted by the word ‘*tvam*’. Therefore, their meaning of identity cannot be taken in a secondary sense.<sup>35</sup>

## Section-VII

### Whether is it a kind of *upāsanā*?

In the *Vedānta* literature, we find several definitions of the term *upāsanā*. Sadānanda defines *upāsanā* is a kind of mental process relating to the qualified i.e. *saguna Brahman* like *śāṇḍilyavidyā*. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, defined- “Meditation (*upāsanā*) means approaching the form of the deity, or the like, as it is presented by the eulogistic portions of the *Vedas* relating to the objects of meditation, and concentrating on it, excluding all wordly thoughts, till one is completely identified with it, as with one’s body, conventionally regarded as one’s self”.<sup>36</sup> Generally, *upāsanā* is a kind of mental affair through which one is able to meet the object of meditation. *Upāsanā* is mainly two types- *a-pratīka* (non-symbolic) and *pratīka* (symbolic) *upāsanā*. Without any medium *a-pratīka-upāsanā* is

performed. It is a kind of *nirguṇamānaspūjā*. It is purely subjective depend on the activity of mind. *Pratīka* is a symbol like *śālgrāmsīlā*, an image, an idol etc. the ideas of the deities to be meditated on are manifested on these symbols. *Pratīka-upāsanā* is of two kinds-*sampad* and *adhyāsa upāsanā*. In the case of *sampad-upāsanā*, an inferior factor is thought of as a superior factor because of some similarity. In the case of *adhyāsa-upāsanā*, the factor superimposed occupies a subsidiary position, while the locus predominates. The statement “*manaḥviśvadevaḥ*” can be given as an example of *sampad-upāsanā*. The mind is infinite, and the *viśvadevas* are finite. Through the meditation one may wins an infinite world. There is a similarity of ‘infinitude’ between the minds and the *viśvadevas*, for the mind is infinite in its modifications, and the *viśvadevas* are infinite in number. If one meditates on the mind after identifying it with *viśadeva* in imagination, one attains the infinite world. “*Manaḥ Brahman iti upāsate*”, “*ādityo Brahman iti upāsate*” are the examples of *adhyāsa-upāsanā*. In such cases the idea of *Brahman* is superimposed on the mind etc. it should be kept in mind that the points of similarity are maintained where as in *adhyāsa-upāsanā* it is not so. However, in both cases the idea of the substratum is not abandoned. There is a conscious attribution of the idea *Brahman* to the sun or the mind for the purpose of meditation, just as a devotee consciously imposes the concept of *Viṣṇu* on a stone image. The stone image is nothing but a symbol, which serves the purpose of achieving concentration of mind. It should be kept in mind that they are not identical with *Brahman*, but are to be viewed as *Brahman* for the purpose of meditation. The aspirant who meditates on the mind or sun as *Brahman* is definitely aware of the fact that *Brahman* is neither mind nor the sun. Actually, the idea of *Brahman* is superimposed on the mind or the sun for the purpose of *Brahman* realization. Both are not applicable to the *mahāvākyas* for the following reasons:

- If the *mahāvākya*, *Tattvamasi* is to be considered as statement for meditation, it should have contained the word ‘*upāsanā*’ directly in it.
- *Tattvamasi* is not taken for the sake of including *upāsanā* on *Brahman* because when the non-dual nature of *Brahman* is experienced the knowledge of duality abolished and one who has realized one’s identity with *Brahman* cannot meditate on *Brahman*.
- Statements of meditation should contain the word ‘*iti*’. But *Tattvamasi* does not have the word ‘*iti*’
- Are we meditating on *Brahman* as *jīva* or *jīva* as *Brahman*? We cannot meditate *Brahman* as *jīva* for, in that case we will be immediately on the highest or superior principle in term of the the lower one. If we are asked on *jīva* as *Brahman*, repetition of ‘*tat*’ is not necessary.
- There is no place for argumentation or dialouging in *upāsanā*. However, *Tattvamasi* has repeated nine times to clarify the doubts. Therefore, it cannot be an *upāsanāvākya*.
- Moreover if the statement is meant to *upāsanāvākyas*, it should come under *karmakāṇḍa* and not in the *jñānakāṇḍa*
- Interpretating the *Brahmasūtra*, Śaṅkara argues that the knowledge of the unity of the self and *Brahman* should not be accepted as a kind of *sampad upāsanā*. The fruit of the knowledge i.e. the unity is not a new production but already established fact. If the unity of the self and *Brahman* is accepted as a kind of *sampad upāsanā* etc. then it will flout the meaning ascertained by *tātparyalingas* of all words occurring in such sentences and establishing the unity as *Tattvamasi*, *Aham Brahmāsmi*, *Ayamātmā Brahman*. Besides the purport of the scriptural texts like – “*bhidyatehṛdayagranthih*” (2.2.8) in which one hears of the result of knowledge consisting in the cessation of nescience becomes

contaminated. The *Śruti* texts like *Tattvamasi* establish the fact that individual self and *Brahman* are really one. If this oneness were admitted as *sampadrūpa-upāsanā* or *adhyāsa-upāsanā*, then the clear declaration of the *Śruti* texts like *Tattvamasi*, *Aham Brahmasmi* etc. would be contradicted. Furthermore if this knowledge of unity of self and *Brahman* is *sampadarūpa* or not real but imaginary, the nature of the self is violated. Moreover, in such cases, it would be impossible to explain satisfactorily the texts like ‘*Tattvamasi*’, ‘*Brahmavidbrahmaivabhavati*’ (*Muṇḍ. Up.* 3.2.9) etc. Therefore, the knowledge of the unity of the self and *Brahman* is not a kind of *sampad* or anything of that sort.

#### Our observation

The four *mahāvākyas* constitute the very essence of the teachings of the *Upaniṣads*. All of them present in most succinct and certain terms the legacy of the *Upaniṣadic* view of human life, of the universe, of the nature of Ultimate Reality, of the goal of life, and the way to the goal. Each of them proclaims the identity of the individual self and the all-pervading Supreme Self. The implied meaning of each *mahāvākya* is that the reality of all realities is none other than the non-dual all-pervading *Brahman*. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the identity of the individual and Universal Self is established through a series of examples. The method of explaining the hidden truth gradually is highly appreciable. The examples given by Uddālaka are of great significance. We may say that the example of bees shows the oneness of *ātman*. The example of rivers is significant in proving that *ātman* is the source of all beings. The examples of trees and salt in water prove the subtlety of *Brahman*. *Tattvamasi* and other *mahāvākyas* are not mere *arthavāda*. If it had been mere praise then repetition of this advice would be superfluous. They are not just



like *upāsanāvākya*. Actually they declare the final message of the *Upaniṣads* in a most direct and deceiving way. *Prajñānam Brahman* and other *mahāvākyas* teach that self-knowledge is a gradual realization of our inmost self. By knowing our inmost self we realize the great Self of all beings. In addition, the quest of this Supreme Self is inward journey. One should fix one's mind on the fact that the identity of the individual self and the Supreme Self and then become established in the fact. Through these *mahāvākyas*, human being becomes divine. Neither he loses his own personality nor is merged into absolute but he realizes the fact that he himself is nothing but the Absolute.

Now we are going to search is there any distinction between 'self-*Brahman* realization' and 'all-*Brahman* realization'? Whether 'the individual self's identity with *Brahman*' and 'the identity of all with *Brahman*' are two different or they are one and the same experience? At the empirical stage, an individual self thinks that it is different from *Brahman*. In this stage, the difference between the 'self and *Brahman*', '*Brahman* and all' and therefore between the 'self' and 'all' are exist. Individual looks upon the differentiated universe as different from *Brahman* and he is different from the universe. These understanding based on ignorance, seem to be real as long as one is ignorant and when ignorance destroyed individual self realizes its oneness with *Brahman* and simultaneously also realizes its oneness with all, for in reality the self is *Brahman* and *Brahman* is all. The realization of 'the self's identity with *Brahman*' is the same as the realization of 'the identity of all with *Brahman*'. Sage Vāmadeva after realizing his identity with realized at the same time his oneness with man, the sun etc; that is with everything. The realization of 'the self's identity with all' is simultaneous with the reality of its identity with *Brahman*. Before the realization of oneness of all with the self is attained, *Brahman* is to be realized as identical with the self. Now the question arises: whether this indicates any cause and

effect relationship between ‘self-*Brahman* identity’ realization and ‘all-*Brahman* identity’ realization. One does not produce another. Both of them refer to the same experience. Causation of any kind is impossible in *Brahmānubhava*. Self’s realization of its oneness with *Brahman* is an end in itself and is never observed to fulfill any other purpose. It only removes the wrong notion that one is not *Brahman* and that one is not all. If on the other hand, ‘all-*Brahman*’ identity realization is to be regarded as a consequence of ‘self-*Brahman*’ identity realization the former realization cannot be eternal for it will be a caused one caused by the latter realization. Things cannot be eternal and be caused at the same time. Since the individual loses its empirical identity and in its absence there will be none to have any further realization like ‘all is *Brahman*’. Therefore, there will remain no scope for further realization. In realization its oneness with *Brahman* the self realizes its oneness with all or becomes all for *Brahman* is everything. There remains nothing different from the self, which will remain to be realized. Then the idea of ‘all’ will not be anywhere, as everything becomes one and undifferentiated. Everything becomes one with the self. Thus the nature and significance of the scriptural statement ‘all is *Brahman*’ are similar to that of the statement ‘that art thou’.<sup>37</sup>

## References:

1. T.M.P.Mahadevan, *The Pañcadaśī of Bhāratitīrtha Vidyāraṇya an Interpretative Exposition* (Madras: University of Madras, 1969), p.53.
2. *Vinā mahāvākyamto na kaśchit pumānsamdvaitamvaiti jantuh/ Sankṣepasārīraka*, 3.303 Sarvjñātmamuni, *Sankṣepasārīraka*, ed. Swāmi Yogendrananda, (Varanasi: Sriudasin Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, 1987), p.540.
3. *Upādhi*- it means the imposition of a character on an object, which really, the object does not posses but it occurs due to the vicinity of an object, which has, that character. As per example, a crystal appears as red due to the vicinity of a red flower.
4. Tapan kumar Chakroborty, “Meaning of Mahavakya in Advaita Vedanta”, *Lights on Philosophy* (Kolkata: Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar, 2012), pp. 275-276.
5. *Māṇḍūkya mekamebakebalam mumukṣuṇām vimuktaye/ tathāpyasiddham ced jñānam daśopaniṣadmpatha//...videhamuktabichhā cedastottarasatam patha//Muktikopaniṣad-26-29*  
*Upanisat-Samgrahah* (containing 188 upanisads), ed. Prof.J.L.Sastri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), p. 658.
6. G.A.Jacob Colonel, *The Vedāntasāra of Sadānanda* (Bombay: Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1934), p.155.
7. Kutastha caitanya=witness consciousness
8. *Sarbam tat prajñānetram prajñāne pratisthitam prajñānetra lokah, prajñā prasthā, prajñānam brahman/Ait.Up.3.1.3*  
*Eight Upaniṣads* with the commentary of Saṁkarabhāṣya, trans. Swami Gambhirananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1958), p.71.
9. *Yenāśrutam śrutam bhavatyamtam matamvijñātam vijñātamiti katham .../ Ch.Up.6.1.3*  
*Upanisat-Samgrahah* (containing 188 upanisads), ed. Prof.J.L.Sastri, op.cit., p.63.
10. *Yathā soumyaikenā mṛtpindeṇa sarvam mṛtmayam vijñātam syād vācārambhaṇam bikāro nāmdheyam mṛtiketyeba satyam/yathā somyaikenā lohmaṇinā sarvam lohamayam vijñātam syād vācārambhaṇam vikāro nāmdheyam lohamityeba satyam/yathā*

*somyekenanakhnikrntanena sarbam kārṣṇāyasam vijñātam syād vācārambhanam vikāro nāmdhyeam kṛṣṇāyasmityeba satymeabam somya sa adeśo bhabatīti// Ch.Up. 6.1.4-6.1.6 Upanisat-Samgrahah (containing 188 upanisads), ed. Prof.J.L.Sastri, op.cit., p.66.*

11. *Paripūrṇah parātmāsmīn dehe vidyādhikāriṇi/Budheh sākṣitayā stitvāsphurannahmitīryate//svatah pūrṇah parātmā'tra brahmaśabdena varṇitah/Asmītaikyaparāmarśas tena brahma bhavā myaham//Pañcadaśī 5.3-4.*  
Vidyāranyamuni, *Pañcadaśī*, trans. Swami Swahananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math,1975), p.123.
12. *Sarvam hyetad Brahman; ayamātma Brahman;/Mān.Up.2*  
*Upanisat-Samgrahah (containing 188 upanisads), ed. Prof.J.L.Sastri, op.cit., p.20.*
13. Vidyāranyamuni, *Pañcadaśī*, trans. Swami Swahananda, op.cit., p.271.
14. M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (London: George & Unwin Ltd, 1932), p.378.
15. *Sa mana ākhyopādhirjībah avidyākāmakarmopadiṣṭām diśam diśam sukhadukhādilakṣaṇām jāgratasvapnayoh patitā gatvā anubhūyetyarthah, anyatra sadākhyāt svātman āyatanam biśramaṇsthāna labdhā prāṇameva prāṇena sarvakāryakāraṇāśrayeṇopalaksitā prāṇa ityucyate sadākhyā parā devatā/Śaṅkarabhāṣya of Ch.Up. 6.8.2*  
*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, trans. Durgacharan Samkhyavedantatirthya, op. cit.,p.693.
16. *Aneka-prakārbrkṣarasānāmpi madhurāmla tiktakatukādīnām madhutvenaikatām gatānām madhuradibhāvena bibeko gṛhyata ityabhiprāyah/yathāyam drṣṭāntah;iti ebameva khalu somya,imāh sarbāh prajā ahanyahani sati sampadya suṣuptikāle marana-pralayayośa na biduh na bijānīyuh-sati sampadyāmahe iti sampannā iti vā// Ch.Up. 6.9.2, ibid., p.710.*
17. *Tā nadyo yathā tatra samdre samudrātmanaikatām gatā na bidurnajānanti-iyam gangā aham asmi, iyam Yamunā aham asmiti ca/ebameva khalusomya,imāh sarbāh prajāh yasmāt sati sampadyana biduh, tasmāt sata āgamyā na biduh na biduh tasmāt sata āgamyā na biduh –sata āgachhāmahe āgatā iti vā/ Ch.Up.6.10.2, ibid., pp.714-715.*

18. *Brkṣasya rasasrabanaśoṣanādi lingāt jīvabattvam dṛṣṭāntaśruteśca cetanābantah stābbarā iti boudhakāṇāmatam-acetanāh stābarā ityetadasāramiti darśitam bhavati/ Ch.Up. 6.11.2., ibid., p.719.*
19. *Etasya vai kila somya, eṣa mahānyagrodhah bijasyāṇimnah sūksmsyādrśyamānasya kāryabhūtah stulaśākhāskandha-phalapalāsabān tiṣṭhati utpannaḥ san uttiṣṭhīti vā, ucchebdah adhyāhāryah; atah śradhatsveti somya, sata ebaṇimnah stūlam nāmrupādimat kāryam jagadutpannamiti// 6.12.2, ibid., p.723.*
20. *Yathā atraiba udake darśansparśanābhyāmānupalabhyamānam labanam bidyamāneva jīhabayopalabddhabānasi, ebameva atraiba kila bidyamānam syāt jaganmūlam upāyāntareṇalabaṇāṇimbat upalapsyase//6.13.2, ibid.,p.728.*
21. *Nāsi tvam samsārī amuṣya putratvādidharmabān kintarhi? Syad yat, tat tvamsītya vidyāmohapatābhinhanāt mokṣito gandhāra puruṣabacca svam sadātmānmupasampadya sukhī nirbhītah syāt, ityetamebārthamāh acaryabān puruṣo bedeti//6.14.2, ibid; p.732*
22. *Samsāriṇo yo maraṇakramah sa ebāyam biduṣopi syatsampattikram iti etad āha – parasyām dubatāyām tejasi sampanne atha na jānāti/abidvāmstu sata utthyāya prāgbhābitam byāghrādibhābam debamanuṣyādi bhābam vā biṣati; bidvānstu śastracāryo padeśajanita-jñādipprakāśitam sadbrahānatmānam prabiśya nābarttate, ityeṣa syatsampattikramah//6.15.2, ibid., p.740.*
23. *Sa yathā satyābhisandhah taptaparaśu grahankarmaṇi satyabyabahitahasta talatvāt nādāhyeta na dahyeta iti etat, ebam syadbrahma-satyābhisandhetarayoh śarīrpātkāle ca tulyāyām satsampattau bidvān syad sampadye...//6.16.2, ibid., p.746.*
24. *See as before*
25. *Yadi hi “tattvamasi”(Ch.Up. 6.8.7) iti ebamjātīyakam vākyam sakṛt śrūyamāṇam brahmātmavapratītim na utpādayet, tatah tadeba ābartyamānam utpādayiṣyati iti kā pratyāśāsyāt? Ata uccayate-na kebalam vākyam kamchit artham sāḁṣātkartum śaknoti, atah yuktyapekṣam vākyam anubhāvayiṣyati brahmātmavam iti/ tathāpi avrtyānarthakyam eva//”Śaṁkarabhāṣya of Brahmasūtra 4.1.2*  
*Bādarāyaṇa, Vedāntadarśanam, ed. Swami Viswaurupananda (Kolkata: UdbodhanKaryalaya,1997), pp.10-11.*
26. *Athāpi syāt yuktyā vākyena ca sāmānyaviṣyam eva vijñānam kriyate, na viśe ṣ avi ṣ yam/yathā‘asti ye hidaye śūlam’, iti atah vākyāt gātrakampādilingāt ca*

*śūlasadvābasāmānyam eva parah pratipadyate, na viśeṣam anubhabati yathā sah eva śūli/viśeṣanubhavasca avidyāyāh nibartakah tataḥ tadarthā ābṛttiḥ*// ibid., p. 11.

27. *Atra uccyate- bhabed āvṛtṭyānarthakyam tam prati yah “tattvamasi” iti sakṛd uktam eba brahmātmavam anubhabitum śaknuyāt/yastu na śaknoti, tam prati upayujyate eba āvṛtṭih/tathā chāndogye “tattvamasi śvtaketo”*(Ch.Up.6.8.7) *iti upadiśya “bhūyah eva ma bhagavān vijñāpayatu”*(Ch.Up.6.8.7) *iti punaḥ punaḥ pratibodyamānah tattadāśamkākāraṇam nirākṛtya “tattvamasi” iti eba asakṛt upadiśati*//ibid., p.13.
28. *Eṣa byābṛttasarbasamsārdharmakah anubhābātmakah brahmasamjñakah tatpadārth vedāntābhiyukktānām prasiddhah/tathā tvampadarthopi pratyagātmā śrotā dehāt ārabhya pratyagātmatayā sambhābyamānah caitanyaparjantatvena avadhārititah/tatra yeṣām etau padārthau ajñānasamśayabiparyayapratibddhau teṣām “tattvamasi” iti etat vākyam svārthe pramām na utpādayitum śaknoti padārthajñānapūrbakatvāt vākyārthasya /iti atah tāt prati eṣṭabyah padārthabibekapryojanah śāstrayuktyabhyāsah*//ibid., p.14-15.
29. *Yeṣām punaḥ nipuṇamatīnām na ajñānasamśayabiparyalakṣaṇah padārthabṣayah pratibandhah asti, te śaknubanti sakṛt uktam eva tattvamasivākyārtham anubhabitum iti tāt prati āṛtyānarthkyam iṣtam eba/ sakṛt utpannā eba hi ātmapratipatthi avidyām nibartayati iti na atra kaścidapi karmaḥ abhupagamyate*// ibid., p.16.
30. *Yasya tu na eṣah anubhabahdrāk iba jāyate, tam pratiāanubhabartha eva āvṛtṭyabhyupagamah/tatrāpi na tattvamasi vākyārthāt prachhābya āvṛttau prabartṭyayet/na hi barghātāyay knyām udvāhayanti/nijuktasya ‘asmin adhikritah aham karttā, mayā idam karttyabyam’ iti abaśyam brahmapratyāt biparītapratyayah utpadyate/yastu syam eba mandamatih apratibhānāt tam vākyārtham jihāset, tasya etasmin eba vākyārthye stīrīkārah āvṛtṭyādivācoyuktyā abhyupeyate/tasmāt parabrahmavisaye api pratyaye tadūpāyopadeśeṣu āvṛtti-siddhiḥ*//ibid., p.18-20.
31. *Chāndogye tu sa deva somya idamagrye asit ekamebaditiyam*(ch.6.2.1), *iti antarenaiva atmsabdam upakramya udarke “ sa atma tattvamasi”*( ch.6.8.7),*iti tadatmyam upadisati/ tatra samsayah- tulyartham kim anayoh amnanayoh syat, atulyartam va iti?* ibid., p.300.
32. *Yaduktam upakramanvayat upakrame ca atmasabdasravanabhavat na atmagrhitih iti;tasya kah priharah iti cet?/sah abhidhiyate-“syat avadharanat iti/bhavet upapanna iha atmagrhitih abadharanat/ tathahi-“yena asrutam srutam bhavati, amatam matam, avjinatam vijnatam*(ch 6.1.3), *iti ekavijnanena sarbavijnam abadharya tat*

*sampipadayiyisa “sadeba”ityaha/tacca atmagrhitau satyam sampadyate/ anyatha hi yah ayam mukhyah atma sah na vijñatah iti naiiba sarbaviññanam sampadyet/tatha pragutpatteh ekatvabadharanam, jibasya ca atmasabdena paramarsah, svapabastayam ca tatsvabhabasampattikathanam, paricodanapurbakam ca punah punah “tattvamasi”(ch 6.8.7),iti abadharanam iti ca sarbam etat tadatmyapratipadanayam eva abakalpate, na tadatmyasampadanayam// ibid., p.303.*

33. *Brahmasūtra* 3.3.17

*The Brahmasūtra Sāṅkarabhāṣya with the commentaries Bhāmati, Kalpataru and Parimala*, vol-2, ed. K.L.Joshi (Delhi: Parimal Publications, 2007), p.771.

34. *Prāśastya-nindā-anyataraparam vākyam arthavāda/ Arthasaṃgrahah*-103

Laugakṣi Bhaskar, *Arthasaṃgraha*, trans. Rajeswar Sastri (Vārāṇasī Chaukhambha Sanskrita Samsthan, 2009), p. 340.

35. *Na ca idam vākyam ‘tvam indro’si’ itibat stutiparam, nabakṛtvah abhyāsvaiyarthaprasangāt/na hi stutih punah punah paricodanāpūrvakam kvacit abhyasyate/ataeva na arthavādah ananyasesatvāt ca/na hi asmin prakaraṇe anyat kimcit pradhānvākyam upalabhyate, yachheyatvena idam artha vādarūpam bhavet/nāpi rajpuruṣe ‘rājā ayam’ itibat aupacārikam apramitbhedayoh aikyasya aupacāriktvānupapattih//Vidvanmanorañjinī commentary of Vedāntasāra* 117

Sadananda, *Vedāntasāra*, trans. Bramacari Medhacaitanya (Kolkata: Adyapitha Balakāshrama, 2010), p.148.

36. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.3.9p.

*Upaniṣat-saṃgraha* (containing 188 upanisads) ed. Prof. J.L. Sastri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), p.86.

37. *Śaṅkarabhāṣya of Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 4.4.6.,ibid.,p.118.

## Third Chapter

### Metaphysical Significance of *Tattvamasi* from the *Advaitic* point of view

*Tattvamasi* or ‘that art thou’ was advised nine times in section 8<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> of chapter 6<sup>th</sup> of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. It was well-known instruction about the Supreme Reality given to Śvetaketu by his father Uddālaka in ever-memorable words. Uddālaka advised in the beginning, that the modifications of things are dependent on mere words, a name only. The Supreme Self, the only *sat*, one without second, projecting name and form by entering first into fire, water and earth, the manifoldness of the world is mere phenomenal.<sup>1</sup> Uddālaka produces nine arguments with analogies to establish the nature of being and individual self is essentially of the nature of *Brahman*. Each of nine arguments ends with the famous passage-

“*Aitādātatmyamidam sarvam tat satyam sa ātmā tattvamasi Śvetaketu.*”(Ch.Up.6.8.7)

It means –that existence which is this extremely subtle thing, is the self of this entire universe. That Reality is the Self that thou art Śvetaketu. Uddālaka told to Śvetaketu that he is *ātman*, and that all this is *ātman*, the very subtle essence, the *sat*. Gobindānanda (17<sup>th</sup> century), the author of *Ratnaprabhā*, the famous gloss on *Śārīraka-bhāṣya* explains the text ‘*tattvamasi*’ as- “...*na asi tvam samsāri, kintu tattvamsi...*”<sup>2</sup> The message of this section is- Śvetaketu not just a *samsāri* but the unconditional *sat*, the Supreme *Brahman*, the Self of all. Actually Uddālaka did not just teach monism of being in a general form rather he wanted to led his son to apply the teaching to himself to include himself consciously in the fact of the Universal one, to identify himself with the truth ‘That art thou’.



## Section-I

### Vākya and its types

Before we enter into a detailed critical discussion on the purport of *mahāvākya* we at first try to compare and contrast it with *vākya* or ordinary sentence. A sentence is a unit of words, which express our thoughts meaningfully. The collection of words in a sentence is such that it does not leave the hearer in the eager expectation of hearing more to get information complete in itself. A sentence may be defined as follows: "... sentence is a means of valid knowledge in which the relation that is the object of its intention is not contradicted by any other means of valid knowledge."<sup>3</sup> A sentence is not mere a combination of words.

Generally, every sentence has at least two words-a subject and a predicate. A sentence with an intransitive verb requires a minimum of two words. A sentence with a transitive verb requires a minimum of three words. Both these types are called simple sentence. By nature, ordinary sentence is always relational. As per example, '*pustakam ānaya*' or 'bring a book' expresses a kind of knowledge providing relation among the book i.e. '*pustakapadārtha*', the object i.e. '*karma padārtha*' and activity of bringing i.e. '*ānayan kriyā*'. These types of sentences are called relational sentences or '*saṃsṛṣṭārthavākya*'. Technically they are defined as-'*saṃsarga gocara pratīti janakam*'<sup>4</sup>. Besides this type of relational sentences, we find other types of sentences, which are non-relational in nature. Such types of sentences never produce any relational meanings. They only establish the '*svārūpmātratva*' or identity between subject and predicate. These types of identity sentences are known as '*akhaṇḍārthakavākya*' or non-relational sentences. They are defined as '*saṃsarga-agocara-pratīti janakam*'.<sup>5</sup> *Saṃsṛṣṭārtha-vākyas* are of two types in nature-

- *Bheda-saṃsargārthaka*
- *Abheda –saṃsargārthaka*

As per example –‘*pustaka ānaya*’ this types of sentence are ‘*bheda-saṃsargārthaka*’ and a paper is white is an example of ‘*abheda-saṃsargārthaka*’. Following Āpadeva (C.1580-1650 C.E.), the commentator of *Vedāntasāra*, we are going to explain this type of sentence. Sarvajñātmamuni (9<sup>th</sup> century), the author of *Samkeśapaśārīraka*, Āpadeva, the commentator of *Vedāntasāra* cited the example of ‘*prakṛṣṭaparakāśa candraḥ*’. One may argue that this type of sentence is also relational in nature. Here the *viśeṣya* ‘*candraḥ*’ is being characterized by *viśeṣaṇa* ‘*prakṛṣṭa prakāśatva*’. Undoubtedly, the sentence produces a relation between moon and bright illumination. However, the *Advaitins* producing their own view try to establish this. Being innocent one may ask: In this sky which is the moon? The answer from a knowledgeable person is thus: ‘The brightest object in the sky is the moon’. Here obviously the answer does not refer to any quality of the moon, nor the rational nature of the moon, which shines with the excelling brightness-only the moon is indicated and not the senses of those words themselves. Thus, the sentence has an impartatite sense of the identity of the moon. The word ‘*prakṛṣṭa*’ cannot express any relation rather it simply identifies ‘*candraḥ*’ with ‘*prakṛṣṭaparakāśaḥ*’. Like ‘*prakṛṣṭa prakāśaḥcandraḥ*’ the sentence ‘*so’yam Devadattaḥ*’, ‘*Tattvamasi*’ etc. are ‘*akhaṇḍārthavodhakavākya*’. We should keep in mind that all *mahāvākya*s are ‘*akhaṇḍārthavodhakavākya*’ but not all ‘*akhaṇḍārthavodhakavākya*’ are *mahāvākya*. ‘*Prakṛṣṭa-prakāśaḥ candraḥ*’ is an *akhaṇḍārthavodhakavākya* but not *mahāvākya*.

The *Advaitins* declare the identity of *jīva* with *Brahman* based on *mahāvākya* like *Tattvamasi*. However, it is our common assumption that the literal meaning of ‘*Tat*’ significantly differs from that of ‘*tvam*’. The former denotes the meaning of consciousness characterized by indirectness

and infinity. The word ‘*Tat*’ stands for the ultimate metaphysical principle, all encompassing and one without a second. It also signifies that is something transcending experience, remote and mediately cognised. On the other hand, ‘*tvam*’ signifies the individual self, that is immediate, self-revealing and is also related with all the finitude and imperfections of mundane life. According to Vidyāraṇyamuni (14<sup>th</sup> century), the direct meaning of the word ‘*Tat*’ is pure consciousness with *māyā* and reflection of consciousness in it. On the other hand, ‘*tvam*’ stands for the consciousness, which is limited by the adjunct, the inner organ and the object of the idea and word. The word ‘is’ stands for the relation between ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’.<sup>6</sup>None can deny the fact that ‘*prakāśattva*’ and ‘*aprakāśattva*’, ‘*sarvajñatva*’ and ‘*alpajñatva*’ are opposed in nature. So their identity, which is the intentionality of *mahāvākya*, can never be literally achieved. Neither *Brahman* can be one without a second and still be one with the individual self, which is supposed to be one entity among many entities limiting by their very being, nor the individual self, which is immediate and self-manifesting in all experience be one with *Brahman* supposed to be transcendent of immediate experience. Therefore, a simple identification of the two –the limited and the Absolute, is impossible because of the incompatibility of the characteristic attributed to the two. Now the question arises with be regard to the establishment of the identity of two different entities. *Tattvamasi*, which expresses non-relational identity (*akhaṇḍārtha*), is explicated by means of three relations. As it is said-

*Sāmmānādhikaraṇyaṁ ca viśṣaṇaviśeṣyatā/*

*Lakṣyalakṣyaṇasambandhaḥ padārthapratyagātmanām/(Citsukhī)*

These three relations are-

- *Sāmmānādhikaraṇya* (coordination)
- *Viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣya-bhāva* (relation between attribute and substance)

- *Lakṣya-lakṣaṇā-bhāva* (relation between indicated and indicator)

The significance of the text *Tattvamasi* may be understood by means of three kinds of relations. We are going to explain the nature of these relations in our next section to present the fullness of knowledge of *Tattvamasi*.

## Section-II

### *Akhaṇḍārtha* and the three relations

#### *a) Sāmānādhikaraṇyam*

Nṛsiṃha Sarasvatī (16<sup>th</sup> century), the author of *Subodhinī* the famous gloss of *Vedāntasāra* defines *Sāmānādhikaraṇya* as-“*bhinna-pravṛtti-nimittayoḥ ekasmin arthe pravṛttau sāmānādhikaraṇyam*”.<sup>7</sup> It means when two words having different denotative meanings, are used to stand for one *akhaṇḍārtha*, they have to be in the same relation of *Sāmānādhikaraṇya*. *Sāmānādhikaraṇya* is the relationship between two words having the same locus. It exists between two words with the same case endings or termination conveying one whatever may be the difference in their connotation. To start with, we must have two terms with different imports. The initial divergence of meanings must be overcome by fusion of significance affected by the unitary force of the proposition. The *Advaitins* tried to expound this kind of relation with the help of mundane example-‘This is that Devadatta’ or ‘*So’yam Devadattaḥ*’. None can deny that through the sentence ‘This is that Devadatta’ an identity is established, and the identity is achieved through the contradictory expressions ‘that’ and ‘this’. We know from our acquaintance with the *Sanskṛit* language that the word ‘that’ signifies ‘Devadatta of a past time and of a distant place’ where as ‘this’ signifies ‘Devadatta of the present time and of the

contiguous place’. If such interpretation is reached through the primary function (*abhidhā*) of the words of the sentence, contradiction is inevitable, but none can deny the fact that inspite of such apparent contradiction the sentence indicates in the identity of ‘Devadatta of past time and distant place’ and ‘Devadatta of present time and contiguous place’. Here in two cases, the connotation of being different in tense, one may presume that ‘that’ and ‘this’ respectively distinguish ‘Devadatta’ of a past time from that of a present time. However observing the grammatical agreement between the two words, we can conclude both the words are intended to refer one and the same person called namely ‘Devadatta’. Similarly, it occurs in the case of the *Vedic* dictum ‘*Tattvamasi*’. Here ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ are different words. Their denotative meanings are different. Here the word ‘*Tat*’ signifies consciousness which is characterized by the quality of invisibility remoteness, omniscience etc. and the word ‘*tvam*’ signifies consciousness characterized by the quality of visibility, immediacy, limited knowledge etc. though their difference in connotation. Both ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ appear to be different things. However, both refer to one and the same *Brahman*. Actually, the ‘*śakyatāvacchedaka*’ or ‘*pravṛtti-nimittaḥ*’ or denotative meaning of ‘*Tat*’ is *parokṣatva-sarvajñatvādi-viśiṣṭa-caitanya* and the denotative meaning of ‘*tvam*’ is *aparokṣatva-alpajñatvādi-viśiṣṭa-caitanya*. However, both of the two words refer to same consciousness as their locus. Now noticing grammatical agreement between ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’, we may say that these two refer to the same consciousness or *Brahman*.<sup>8</sup> An objection may be raised: is the *sāmānādhikarāṇya* to be understood in the sense of ‘*abheda*’ or ‘*bheda*’? Is there any stronger argument in favour of the one rather than the other? *Sāmānādhikarāṇya* may occur for the *bhādhā-nimittaka*. As per example-‘*ya sarpaḥ sa rajjuḥ*’. Here the words ‘*sarpaḥ*’ and ‘*rajjuḥ*’ being in the first case ending are known to have *sāmānādhikarāṇya*. Here the ‘*tātparya*’ does not enshrined in the *abheda* of two rather the

*sāmānādhikaraṇya* is due to *bādha*. *Sarpa* is contradicted by the *raju*. Similar thing may occur in the case of *Tattvamasi*.

*Tat* = *Brahman* who is *asaṁsārī*

*Tvam* = *jīva* who is *saṁsārī*

Here identity is impossible. Here *sāmānādhikaraṇya* is *bādha-nimittaka*. Vivaraṇācārya counters this problem. According to him, *pratibimba* cannot differ from *bimba*. Infact they are identical. Though the *śakyatāvachchedaka* of ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ are different, they both indicate one undivided consciousness. The author of the *Bālābodhinī* further added-“*samānavibhakyantayoḥ padayoḥ ekasmin arthe tātparyam sāmānādhikaraṇyam ityārthaḥ*”. Therefore, their intended meaning may be understood in the sense of *abheda* only.

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his famous writings ‘*Advaitasiddhi*’ classified *sāmānādhikaraṇya* into four main types-<sup>9</sup>

- *Adhyāsa-sāmānādhikaraṇyam*
- *Bādhasāmānādhikaraṇyam*
- *Viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva-sāmānādhikaraṇyam*
- *Abheda-sāmānādhikaraṇyam*

Now the question arises which of them will be adequate to bring out the true significance of *Tattvamasi*? *Adhyāsa* is the apprehension of something as something else. When we see a snake in place of a piece of rope mistakenly, we express our cognition in the form-‘this is snake’. The statement is due to erroneous cognition. As the main aim of *mahāvākya* is to remove the false knowledge, it cannot be interpreted as *adhyāsa-sāmānādhikaraṇya*. If it is further argued that this type of *sāmānādhikaraṇya* can be applied to the *Tattvamasi*, then the *mahāvākya* should

have been in the form ‘this is *Brahman*’ or ‘this is *jīva*’. But the *mahāvākyas* are always in the form *jīva is Brahman*. Hence, the *mahāvākya* cannot be interpreted through *adhyāśasāmānādhikaraṇyam*, which is nothing but erroneous cognition. In the case of *bādhā sāmānādhikaraṇyam*, someone mistakes ‘the trunk of a tree to be a man’. Another man corrects him by saying that the ‘the object is tree’. The statement intends to show that the object is only ‘a trunk of a tree’. The terms ‘trunk’ and ‘man’ are contradictory related. Yet on hearing the statement the man who has misunderstood the ‘trunk of a tree to be a man’, corrects him by giving up the object ‘man’. Therefore, the coordinate relation, which exists between the terms ‘trunk of a tree’ and ‘man’ in the above statement is in terms of contradiction. If we accept this type of coordinate relation of *sāmānādhikaraṇya* in interpreting the *Tattvamasi* (which expresses the *jīva-Brahman* identity), we have to give up either the *jīva* or *Brahman*. If one of them is to give up by this process, then the purpose of *Tattvamasi* is lost. For instance, if *Brahman* is abandoned by this process, the purport of the *mahāvākya*, that the ‘*jīva* is nothing but *Brahman*’ is lost. The well-known example of ‘*viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva-sāmānādhikaraṇya sambandha*’ or coordinate relation of substantiv attribute is the ‘blue lotus’ (*nīlam utpalam*). The expression denotes one and the same thing which being a lotus has also the attribute of blueness. Generally, adjective differentiates objects from one another, which are belonging to the same class. In the case of blue lotus, there are many individuals having the colour of red, white etc. in the class lotus. Therefore, when we predicate a quality like blue of a particular individual of this class, the adjective ‘blue’ distinguishes it from others of different colours as well as negates the application of other adjectives. In spite of the two words, ‘blue’ and ‘lotus’ have different connotations, they have the same denotation. No doubt it is a case of linguistic identity although there is a

difference between the ‘lotus’ and the ‘blueness’. Where and how can this type of relation involving the ‘substantive-attribute relation’ be applied to the *Tattvamasi*?

To eradicate this type of doubt the *Advaitins* are going to ask between the two words referring to ‘*Tat*’ (*Brahman*) and ‘*tvam*’ (*ātman*), which is the substance and which is the attribute? Neither ‘*Tat*’ nor ‘*tvam*’ can be considered as *guṇa* or attribute for only insentient things are attributes of something else. Secondly, since *Brahman* is unique, there is no use of applying adjectives to it. If *Brahman* be considered as a known object (*prasiddha*) then adjectives applied to *Brahman* will be meaningful. However, since *Brahman* is not such an object any number of adjectives to it is meaningless. In substance-attribute relation, the identity is of relational identity. However, in the case of ‘*Tattvamasi*’ the identity that is referred to be a non-relational unitary identity. Therefore, *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva sāmānādhikaraṇya* cannot be applied to the *Tattvamasi*.

We may explain the *Abheda sāmānādhikaraṇya* with the help of well-known example of ‘*So’yam Devadattaḥ*’. Devadatta whom had seen a few years ago at a certain place now is seen today at a different place under other circumstances. After a careful looking, we recognize that he is the same Devadatta. Here we overlook the essential differences and emphasize the essential identity of the same person, ‘Devadatta’. In spite of difference in respect of time, place, circumstances the identity of the Devadatta is established. Similarly, the well-known illustration of real identity as advised in the *Upaniṣad* is ‘thou art that’. Hearing the import of the expression from the teacher, being conceived by the arguments in favour and last by meditating upon this the student attains the truth that *jīva* is identical with *Brahman*.

b) *Viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva*:

The second relation is that of *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva*. Sadānanda tries to relate the meanings of



the two terms as ‘*viśeṣaṇa*’ and ‘*viśeṣya*’ i.e. as attribute and substance. In the same sentence, “*So’yam Devadattaḥ*”, the meaning of the term ‘*sah*’ (that) is Devadatta existing in the past and the meaning of ‘*ayam*’ (this) is Devadatta existing in the present. These two are contrary concepts but they qualify each other as they indicate one and the same ‘Devadatta’. Similarly, in the sentence, ‘*Tattvamasi*’ there is a relation between the consciousness characterized by mediacy etc., as indicated by the term ‘*Tat*’, and the consciousness characterized by immediacy etc., as indicated by the term ‘*tvam*’. Though they are contrary concepts, still they qualify each other to signify a common substratum. Thus, the *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva* relation is constituted here between *Tat* and *tvam*.<sup>10</sup>

c) *Lakṣaṇā*

The third relation through which this identity is established is known as *lakṣaṇā*. According to *Advaitins*, the identity of *jīva* and *Brahman*, which is the intention of the *Śruti*, communicated through *lakṣaṇā*. Generally, words have two types of meanings:

- Primary meaning
- Secondary meaning

What is directly meant by a word is its primary meaning. It is known through its inherent potency. However, there are some exceptional situations. If primary meaning of a word has taken in account, then the expression sometimes would turn out to be meaningless. Now in order to make such expressions meaningful, we have to take to some other meaning of the word to solve the problem. However, newly accepted meaning must be related to the original primary meaning of the word. Primary meaning is something, which is directly meant by a word. An implied or secondary meaning is something, which is implied by a word indirectly. If the primary meaning

of the words of a sentence were inadequate for the apprehension of their logical connection and its import then implied meaning should be accepted. As per example, the city mourned over the death over the king. Here the word ‘city’ implied citizens. In other words, if primary meaning is incomprehensible (*mukhyārtha-bādhā*) then we look for the secondary one.

According to the author of the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* the intention of the sentence rather than the logical connection of the words that compels us to take implication or secondary meaning of words or sentences.<sup>11</sup> However, the root of implication is the frustration of intention alone, and not the logical connection of words. As per example, we discuss the famous example of ‘*kākebhyo dadhi rakṣyatām*’. In this sentence, there is no logical inconsistency between the words. However, here the intention of the speaker is that the protections of curd not only from the crows but also from other creatures like dogs and cats that may soil the curd. Here the implication is urgent not for logical inconsistency but for the intention. *Vedāntins* claimed that sentences as well as the words have implied meanings or secondary meanings or *lakṣaṇā*. *Lakṣaṇā* can be divided three types-

- *Jahat*
- *Ajahat*
- *Jahadajahat*

In the case of *jahat lakṣaṇā*, primary meaning is totally abandoned and it substitutes a new meaning, which has connection with literal meaning.<sup>12</sup> As per example ‘*Gangāyām ghoṣaḥ*’. There is a cowherd colony on the bank of the river. Here the direct meaning of the river is the stream of water or *jalaprabāha*. The meaning is discarded as there cannot be a village on the river of *Ganges*. Therefore, we compel to accept an implied meaning-‘the village of cowherd

colony is on the bank of *Ganges*'-though the latter meaning is altogether distinct from the former. Here the primary meaning is excluded and some other meaning, which is other than primary sense, is accepted. The direct meaning of '*Ganges*' i.e. the stream of water is replaced by the indirect meaning the bank. The village on the '*Ganges*' is a classic example of the primary meaning to be rejected. The meaning for treating it as an example of the primary meaning to be rejected. The meaning for treating it as an example of *jahallakṣaṇā* is that the village and river *Ganges* stand to each other as the supported and supporter relationship (*ādhāra-ādheya-sambandha*). When it is interpreted literally, the primary meaning does not hold good. In the primary sense, the word '*Ganges*' refers to the flow of water and not to the bank so we are leaving the primary meaning(*Ganges*) and take the bank which is associated with the river *Ganges*, as the secondary one. Now there is no contradiction in understanding the meaning of this expression.

In some cases the literal meaning unable to generate the meaning in the true sense of the term therefore it is required something extra besides the literal meaning.<sup>13</sup> Here the denotative meaning is not given up and the implied meaning includes the primary meaning too. As per example '*Śvetaḥ dhāvanti*'-the white colour is running. It is impossible for an action like running to be present in a quality like white colour. The action like running can be possible only in a qualified substance. Now to make the expression sensible we are to mean by 'white' something like 'white horse'. We get the meaning of the sentence by associating a white horse with the white colour. When we add a suitable meaning to understand the sentence without abandoning the primary meaning, it is called *ajahallakṣaṇā*. In such cases, something extra is taken into account after retaining the primary meaning. The term means 'coloured entity' i.e. horse.

In *jahadajahallakṣaṇā* some part of the expressed sense of the sentence is accepted and partly is abandoned.<sup>14</sup> Here the expressed sense of the sentence is partly included and partly excluded. As per example, ‘*So’yam Devadattaḥ*’ or ‘this is that Devadatta’. Here the general meaning of the sentence is thus-‘this is the man whom I had met before is seen at this time in this place’. The primary meaning of ‘that Devadatta’ is the Devadatta seen at some other time in some other place. The expressive meaning of spatio-temporal difference is given up and another portion of the expressed meaning that remains and conveys the idea of the same Devadatta is taken up. Their identity points to a single individual devoid of the temporal and spatial qualifier.

The meanings of two words are partially given up and partially accepted by means of *bhāgatyaṅgalakṣaṇā*. In the case of *Tattvamasi*, the conflicting qualities like *parokṣatva*, *sarvajñatva*, *aparokṣatva*, and *alpajñatva* respectively are given up. There is the relation of identity with another portion conveying the idea of pure consciousness. After the discussion of the text, *Tattvamasi* leaves the conclusion that the import of that statement can be established by *bhāgatyaṅgalakṣaṇā* as in the example of ‘*So’yam Devadattaḥ*’ or its meaning. Though the two expressions ‘that’ and ‘this’ denote by their primary meaning ‘Devadatta of past time and distant place’ and ‘Devadatta of present time and contiguous place’ respectively we can easily establish the identity of Devadatta. Because of the contradictions involved in one part of their import (Devadatta as existing in the past and in the present) implies, by abandoning the conflicting portion, which has reference to time and place, only the non-conflicting portion i.e. the man Devadatta. Similarly, in the sentence, ‘that art thou’ or its meaning, because of the contradictions involved in one part of their import, the identity of consciousness cannot be obtained. In the sentence, ‘*Tattvamasi*’ or its meaning, on account of the contradictions involved in one part of their import, the identity of consciousness cannot be obtained. However, abandoning that

contradictory portion which has relation to invisibility, visibility etc; their remains only absolute pure consciousness which is common to both ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’. This proves the identity of *jīva* and *Brahman*, which is the real purport of the *Upaniṣadic* dictum, *Tattvamasi*.

An opponent holds the view that the meaning of the words ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ in the sentence *Tattvamasi* may be established in the manner of the phrase like the blue lotus without taking the help of *bhāgalakṣaṇā*.

However, the words ‘*nīlam*’ and ‘*utpalam*’ are themselves distinguished from each other, yet by virtue of their position in the phrase they qualify each other pointing to the one and the same object *utpalam*. In the phrase ‘*nīlam utpalam*’-the meaning of the word ‘*nīlam*’ is the blue colour excludes other colours such as white etc. and the meaning of the word ‘*utpalam*’ is flower called lotus which excludes other objects like cloths etc. they respectively excludes other colour and things. Thus, the two words mutually stand in the relation of qualifier and qualified and this relation means their mutual qualification or their unity since it does not contradict any other means of knowledge the interpretation of the sentence is admissible. Blue lotus indicates neither all lotuses nor all blue things. Here the blue lotus means that lotus, which is blue, and that blue colour which is associated with the lotus is only indicated. This interpretation does not contradict any other means of knowledge, like direct perception etc., therefore ‘*nīlam utpalam*’ can be well understood without taking the help of *bhāgatyaḡgalakṣaṇā*.

However, application of *bhāgatyaḡgalakṣaṇā* is necessary here. The word ‘*Tat*’ indicates the consciousness characterized by invisibility and another word ‘*tvam*’ indicates consciousness which characterized by visibility etc. these two objects possess mutually contradictory qualities. Hence any mutual relationship of qualifier and qualified between them cannot be possible like

‘*nīlam utpalam*’. In the sentence ‘*nīlam utpalam*’, the ‘*nīlatva*’ refers to the *guṇa* (quality) and ‘*utpalatva*’ refers to *dravya* (substance), whereas in the case of *tattvamasi* both ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ refer to *dravya* only. Therefore, the relation of *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva* does not suit in the case of *Tattvamasi*.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, these ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ together by the relationship of *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva* conflicts with other perceptual knowledge itself. It is known by perception that is of partial knowledge, partial power etc. but everyone knows that *Īśvara* is omniscient, omnipotent etc. *jīva* is visible whereas *Īśvara* is invisible. No doubt, the features of *Īśvara* conveyed by the word ‘*Tat*’ does not found in *jīva* conveyed by the word ‘*tvam*’. Therefore, an application of *bhāgyālakṣaṇā* is essential to find out the import of *Tattvamasi*.

Since these two ideas eliminate their mutual distinction stand to each other in the relation of qualifier and qualified meaning their mutual qualification of their unity; it involves a contradiction with direct perception and other means of knowledge and therefore is inconsistent. Therefore, there cannot be any mutual relationship of qualifier and qualified between them, as in the phrase ‘*nīlam utpalam*’ because they are contradictory ideas and their co-existence in the same individual is unthinkable.<sup>16</sup>

The author of *Pañcadaśī* uttered clearly, that we can obtain the correct meaning of ‘*Tattvamasi*’ by the application of *bhāgyālakṣaṇā* but neither by the union of two ideas (*samsarga*) nor by their mutual qualification (*viśiṣṭa*). The real meaning of this sentence is the *akhaṇḍarasa*.<sup>17</sup>

Now one may ask that whether it is consistent to be regarded *Tattvamasi* as an instance of *jahallakṣaṇā*? To eradicate this doubt Sadānanda gave some serious explanations. In

*jahallakṣaṇā*, primary meaning of the terms requires to be completely given up; from our previous discussion, we know that ‘the bank’ becomes the secondary meaning of the word ‘*Gangā*’. Unlike ‘*Gangāyām ghoṣaḥ*’, *jahallakṣaṇā* cannot be applicable to the expression *Tattvamasi* because in the case of *Tattvamasi* contradiction has found partly as regards the visibility of ‘*Tat*’ and invisibility of ‘*tvam*’, but on the part of consciousness they are identical. Here the part of Pure Consciousness, which never involves any contradiction, should not be given up. Therefore, we cannot accept *jahallakṣaṇā* where primary meaning is totally given up.<sup>18</sup>

The opponent may argue that in the example of ‘*Gangāyām ghoṣaḥ*’ the word ‘*Gangā*’ giving up its primary meaning i.e. flow of water denotes ‘the bank’. In the same way, the word ‘*Tat*’ having given up its primary meaning consciousness may secondarily denote divine consciousness which is the primary meaning of the word ‘*tvam*’. Likewise, the word ‘*tvam*’ may secondarily denote divisible individual consciousness by abandoning its own primary meaning. Therefore, the identity between ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ can be established by *lakṣaṇā* of anyone of the word ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ and then *jahallakṣaṇā* would not be inconsistent.

However, this proposal cannot be accepted for the following reason: in the case of ‘*Gangāyām ghoṣaḥ*’ the term ‘*Gangā*’ does not indicate to the meaning of ‘bank’. This meaning can only be conveyed through *jahallakṣaṇā*. However, in the case of *Tattvamasi* the word ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ and their meaning *Īśvara* and *jīva* are explicit. Hence, there is no need of the perception of the sense of each by the other means of *lakṣaṇā*. Further, in the example cited to explain *jahallakṣaṇā* the village and the river *Ganges* stand to each other as the sustained and the sustainer. However, such is not the case between ‘*that*’ and ‘*thou*’. It is altogether absurd to consider the words ‘*that*’ and ‘*thou*’ literally in the sense of container and contained respectively.<sup>19</sup>

In the case of *ajahallakṣaṇā* the *vācyārtha* does not totally abandon like *jahallakṣaṇā* rather, it provides a scope of inclusion of additional factors for clear comprehension. The literal meaning is consistent in the sentence ‘*Soṇaḥ dhāvati*’. As ‘*soṇaḥ*’ is nothing but mere a quality, it cannot run. This inconsistency can be removed without giving up the meaning of the term ‘*soṇaḥ*’ by interpreting it to mean an animal like horse of that colour. ‘*soṇaḥ dhāvati*’-in this case contradiction is removed by the additional word locus of redness. However, in the case of *Tattvamasi*, *ajahallakṣaṇā* is not possible because of abandoning the contradictory portion. Even in the case of bringing some additional factors, the present contradiction cannot be removed. *Ajahallakṣaṇā* is applicable in such cases like ‘*soṇaḥ dhāvati*’, ‘white flag is running’ etc. But in the case of *Tattvamasi* the literal meaning conveying identical consciousness is self contradictory as both of them are associated with invisibility, visibility etc. relating this meaning something else connected with it may be implied, but still the contradiction persists there in, therefore here *ajahallakṣaṇā* is not applicable.<sup>20</sup>

An opponent may propose: either of the words ‘*Tat*’ or ‘*tvam*’ may abandon the contradictory portion of its meaning that of invisibility or visibility respectively and remaining the other non-contradictory portion of consciousness to indicate the meaning of ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’. There will be no need of accepting *bhāgalakṣaṇā*. After the discussion of the text, *Tattvamasi* leaves the conclusion that the import of that statement can be established by *bhāgatyaḥgalakṣaṇā* as in the example of ‘*So’yam Devadattaḥ*’ or its meaning. Though the two expressions ‘that’ and ‘this’ denote by their primary meaning ‘Devadatta of past time and distant place’ and ‘Devadatta of present time and contiguous place’ respectively we can easily establish the identity of Devadatta. Because of the contradictions involved in one part of their import (Devadatta as



existing in the past and in the present) implies, by abandoning the conflicting portion, which has reference to time and place, only the non-conflicting portion i.e. the man Devadatta. Similarly, in the sentence, ‘that art thou’ or its meaning, on account of the contradictions involved in one part of their import, the identity of consciousness cannot be obtained by abandoning that contradictory portion which has relation to invisibility, visibility etc; there remains only absolute Pure Consciousness which is common to both ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’. This proves the identity of *jīva* and *Brahman*, which is the real purport of the *Upaniṣadic* dictum, *Tattvamasi*.

The opponent wanted to say here that the word ‘*Tat*’ giving up the contradictory portion of its meaning like omniscience etc. denote only the non-contradictory portion i.e. Pure Consciousness. Then it can be combined with the import of the word ‘*tvam*’, which is individual consciousness with all its limitations. On the other hand, the word ‘*tvam*’ giving up the contradictory portion of its meaning like partial knowledge etc., and combine the non-conflicting portion, i.e. Pure Consciousness, with the import of the word ‘*Tat*’. Hence, there is no necessity of admitting a third category of *lakṣaṇā*. In this way by having recourse to refusal of primary import like *jahallakṣaṇā* and admittance of additional factors like *ajahallakṣaṇā* we can justify the case of *Tattvamasi*.<sup>21</sup>

However, hardcore *Advaitins* deny the possibility of such proposal. It is impossible to denote by one word the partial meaning of its own along with the entire meaning of the other. When the meaning is directly expressed by other word, it does not require the application of *lakṣaṇā* to the first word to indicate it. It is clear that the word ‘that’ cannot simultaneously mean Pure Consciousness and individual consciousness. Therefore, objection is not admissible here.<sup>22</sup> Again, since the word, ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ clearly express their respective meanings it is

absurd to try to get the meanings of each from the other by resorting to *lakṣaṇā*. We cannot admit the applicability of two types of *lakṣaṇā* in one word. Therefore, we have to admit now the third category of *lakṣaṇā* to justify the case of *Tattvamasi* that can establish the unity of the Universal Self and the individual self.<sup>23</sup>

### Section-III

#### Tradition-break interpretation of Dharmarājā Adhvarīndra

Dharmarājā (1600 C.E.), the author of *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* differs from the traditional *Advaitins* regarding the interpretation of *Tattvamasi*. He does not accept any secondary implication to interpret *Tattvamasi*, though only a part of the denotation is accepted as the purport. His eagerness not to accept any types of *lakṣaṇā* to interpret such type's sentences like 'thou art that' or 'this is that Devadatta'. Perhaps, Dharmarājā believed that there would not be any type of contradiction in taking the reference to the substrates as the primary sense of the words. He himself cites the example of 'pot is eternal'. Here pot denotes both 'individual pot' and the 'potness'. Universal potness is an attribute of individual pot. Words refer to both the substantive and the attribute. Here 'irrespective of the qualification, the predication only holds good of the bare subject'. Therefore, secondary qualification is unnecessary. Non-eternality does not belong to the potness, but only to the pot. The qualification or attribute 'potness' is not urgent to the interpretation of the sentence. There is syntactical relation of non-eternity with what is competent i.e. the bare pot. In the sentence like 'bring the pot', the word 'pot' does not mean the universal potness, which is an attribute of the pot. Rather we mean the individual substance pot and for this, we do not apply *lakṣaṇā* here. Similarly, it occurs in the case of 'thou art that'. It can be explained by the primary

meaning ‘thou’ in the sentence ‘thou art that’ signifies consciousness with the attributes of bodily states of joy and sorrow, etc; whereas ‘that’ denotes consciousness with the attributes of omniscience and bliss. When ‘thou’ is said to be identical with ‘that’, identity of the substantives is to be posited ignoring the attributes. ‘Thou’ and ‘that’ do not refer to the attributes but to the substantives and hence their identity can very well be explained with reference to their primary meaning. Dharmarājā says that previous philosopher’s position with respect to the statement ‘thou art that’ as involving *lakṣaṇā* should be understood as ‘a tentative admission’ in the course of argument ‘*abhyaupagamavadvadnabodhya*’ or a position, which is not finally acceptable. However, in the case of ‘pot is eternal’, the primary meaning of ‘pot’ is given up. The ‘potness’ is eternal in relation to the predicate. The expression ‘that thou art’ resembles more with ‘pot is eternal’. If the ‘pot’ predicate holds good only of the bare subject without the qualification that is irrelevant than ‘that’ and ‘thou’ are referred only by the primary sense of the words and there would be no urgency for any secondary implication or *lakṣaṇā*. If we do so, we must have to be compelled to interpret even such simple statement like ‘bring the pot’ by secondary implication or *lakṣaṇā* since ‘potness’ which cannot be brought has to be discarded.<sup>24</sup>

Generally, Dharmarājā is charged with inconsistency. As an *Advaitin*, he should maintain to the theory that a term primarily refers the class or the *jāti*. As per example, ‘pot’ would refer ‘potness’ for its primary sense. Without recourse to implication, how can this be regarded in ‘pot is non-eternal’ in the statement ‘pot is eternal’. One who denies implication in interpreting this statement in this way must not be an *Advaitin* who always keep the view that the primary meaning of a term is its *jāti*. Therefore, pot cannot be a particular. Dharmarājā argues that ‘pot’ and its primary sense ‘potness’ is the subject. It is clear to all that ‘pot’ is not potness but bare

particular. Thus, either Dharmarājā surrenders the *Advaitic* position regarding the primary sense of terms or accepts traditional view.

#### Section –IV

##### Metaphysical import of *Tattvamasi*

Vācaspati Miśra (9<sup>th</sup> century), the author of *Bhāmatī* the famous gloss of *Śārīraka-bhāṣya* holds the view that verbal testimony gives only mediate knowledge and characterizes the mind as a sense organ.<sup>25</sup> In the case of direct experience as in perception, an *indriya* serves as *karaṇa*. Vācaspati and his followers argue that the continued meditation or *nididhyāsana* i.e. *prasankhyāna* is the process which leads to self-realization. In *prasankhyāna*, mind works as the *karaṇa* required for the immediate realization of the non-dual self.

Perhaps he derives the view from Mandaṇa Miśra (8<sup>th</sup> century) who believes knowledge generated by *śabda* to be mediate. *Avidyā* can be removed only through immediate knowledge. Therefore, verbal testimony is unable to do this since it indicates what is related and mediate. Therefore, deep meditation, which transmutes the mediate knowledge, acquired from verbal testimony into immediate knowledge.

According to Prakāśtman Yati (11<sup>th</sup> century), the author of *Vivaraṇa* and his followers *Brahman* cannot be grasped through mind as *Śruti* assured us that clearly-“*Yato vācānibartante aprāpya manasā saha*”(Taitt.Up 4.2.1). On the other hand, *Śruti* declared that “*tam tvaupaniṣadam puruṣam prcchāmi*”(Br.Up.3.9.26). *Brahman* is known through *vedāntavākya* or *aupaniṣadic* texts. Hearing *vedāntavākya* is the *karaṇa* of knowledge. Again Sarvjñātman (9<sup>th</sup> century) says that a person who engaged in deep-sleep arise when someone calls him. The power of words

makes him arise. As well as *vedāntavākyas* have such a power that it may arise the true knowledge immediately.

*Pañcadaśī* tells us that *jīva* is the reflection of the self,<sup>26</sup> which is affected by the pleasure, and pain of this transmigratory life but not the real life. This understanding is called knowledge. It is achieved through *vicāra* or analytical study.

The immediate knowledge of *jīva Brahman* identity is arisen through the *vicāra* of *vedāntavākyas*. *Mahāvākya* is a kind of *vedāntavākya*. Therefore, *mahāvākya* does the same.

We may raise the question if self-realization is arisen through the *vicāra* of *vedāntavākyas* then why only *mahāvākya* *vicāra* should be considered as primarily. It can be arisen from other *vedāntavākyas* too. The answer is thus given-such types of *vedāntavākyas* raised the immediate knowledge of *ātman* but the point should be noted here that some texts reveal the nature of *Brahman* immediately and some texts reveal the nature of *jīvātman* immediately. However, they never reveal the *jīva-Brahman* identity immediately. Therefore nescience is not properly eradicated through the other *Vedāntic* scriptures. The principal texts of *Upaniṣads* are those, which teach the unity of *Brahman* and individual self. They are called the major texts or *mahāvākyas*. However, the purports of the other *Vedānta* texts are to pave the way for an understanding of the *mahāvākyas*. They serve as the doorway for the aspirant to realize the truth of non-duality. To eradicate the nescience the *mahāvākya* like *Tattvamasi* is necessary. The identity of ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ is the real part of the *Śruti*. *Jīva* and *Brahman* are not distinct rather identical.

Sarvajñātman argues that whether a sentence gives rise to mediate knowledge or immediate knowledge depends upon the nature of the object concerned. If the object is mediate, then the sentence would give rise to only a mediate knowledge of the object. If the object is immediate, then, knowledge could be immediate. Here ‘*ātman*’ is always immediate and hence the *Upaniṣadic* texts give rise to the immediate knowledge of it. Mediacy or immediacy of the knowledge derived from verbal testimony depends upon the character of the object of knowledge.<sup>27</sup> Generally, words can give mediate knowledge of a mediate object. However, in the case of an immediate object they can give also immediate cognition. *Brahman* is immediate and self-luminous. The principal or major texts of the *Upaniṣads* like ‘That thou art’ are capable of giving rise to the immediate knowledge of *Brahman*. Generally, verbal testimony gives us mediate knowledge of things that are remote. What is immediate, it can give us immediate knowledge of *Brahman*. The *Vedāntins* give us the story of ten travelers. The classical example of the story of the tenth man is given. Ten men cross a river, and on reaching the other bank, each man counts to check whether all have reached safe or not? Each one counts only nine and they begin to weep for the tenth man who they think has drowned in the river. A wise man learns of their problem. When the wise man heard the problem of the ten foolish men, he immediately understood the situation. The wise man then proceeds to show them how each one has forgotten to count him and in reality each one is the tenth man.-‘you are the tenth man’. When each one finds out that ‘I am the tenth man’ that becomes his immediate (*aparokṣa*) knowledge.

Similarly in the case of *Brahman* there is at first the mediate knowledge of its existence from the scriptural statement like “in the beginning this was *sat* alone one only without a second” etc. then the *mahāvākyas* like *Tattvamasī* when their purport is clearly understood reveal the immediacy of *Brahman*. Never more does the knowledge that the self is identical with *Brahman* attain

inconstancy. Śaṅkara in his *Vākyavṛtti* states that the *mahāvākyas* are for the sake of the establishment of the immediate experience of *Brahman*.<sup>28</sup> Hence, it is wrong to contend that the *mahāvākyas* do not yield immediate insight into the truth. Through inquiry into the purport of the *mahāvākyas*, one realizes the identity between self and *Brahman*.

*Yoga* or *upāsanāyoga* is the instrument of self-realization; which is assured by Vidyāraṇyamuni. However, he argued that *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* of *vedāntic* text also have pragmatic value. *Śravaṇa* means hearing, stands for a thorough study of the *Upāniṣadic* texts under a competent *guru*. The investigation on the meaning of the *mahāvākya* is called *śravaṇa* or listening. *Manana* is the relational reflaction. With the help of reasoning, the disciple should reflect on what he has studied. Doubts may be arised regarding non-duality. The enquiry and contemplation based on logic and in accordance with the scriptures is called *manana* or reflaction. *Nididhyāsana* is the meditation on what acquired mediate to be true through *śravaṇa* and *manana*. By these *śravaṇa* and *manana* when the meaning is grasped without a single doubt and doubtless knowledge is gained then mind is fully established in this meaning of the *mahāvākya*, namely that which *akhaṇḍa*, *saccidānanda*, that *Brahman* I am is. When *nididhyāsana* is practiced for some time, it leads to *samādhi*. In this state, the mind is very absorbed in the *sat-cit-ananda*. The state is compared to ‘*nibatdipavatcittam*’.<sup>29</sup> A flame, which is kept in a place where there is no mind, is steady with no flicker. So also is the mind fixed steadily on the *Brahman*.

In this state, all the impurities are completely uprooted. The merits and sins of accumulated actions are removed, and the individuality is no more evident from the point of manifestation. Now Vidyāraṇya concluded that the obstacles in the understanding of the meaning of the

*mahāvākya* being removed the direct knowledge about one's own essential nature becomes as evident and self-revealing as the *āmlaka* fruit on the palm of one's hand.<sup>30</sup> From the *Upaniṣadic* text, the immediate knowledge of *Brahman* is arised. However, the person who has analytically studied the *Upaniṣadic* text also may trap into the circle of *saṁsāra*. Why it happened so? Therefore, we must agree that immediate knowledge never be arised from *Upaniṣadic* text.

Generally, the veil of avidya is of two types –

- *Ābhanāpādaka āvaraṇa*
- *Asattāpādaka āvaraṇa*

According to Vidyāraṇya and others which envelopes the essence of an object – *ābhanāpādaka āvaraṇa* resting on *Brahmacaitanya* particularized by an object and that which envelopes the bare existence of an object – *asattāpādaka āvaraṇa* hanging on the *sākṣī caitanya* associated with the mind. Mediate knowledge destroyes the *asattāpādaka āvaraṇa* and immediate knowledge of the *Tattvamasi* destroyes the veil of *ābhanāpādaka āvaraṇa*.

According to Madhusūdāna Sarasvatī, *vedāntic* texts eradicate four types of *pratibandhakas* they are the followings-

- *Viśayabhogavāsanā*
- *Pramāṇāsambhāvanā*
- *Prameyāsambhāvanā*
- *Vīparitabhāvanā*

Self-control eradicates *viśayabhogavāsanā* (lust towards mundane objects). The direct or immediate knowledge of *Brahman* arising from *Upaniṣadic* text is of the immediate or direct in variety. However, owing to the various impurities, obstacles the knowledge appeared as mediate. The impurities, which destroy the assurance that the *Upaniṣadic* texts are the only proof of the



identity of the *jīva* and *Brahman* is known as *pramāṇagata-asambhāvanā* (doubt as the authoritativeness of the *Upaniṣad*). This is removed by *śravaṇa*. It is not mere cognition due to the hearing of the *śāstras* but the analytical study (*vicāra*) of the *Upaniṣads*. Doubts are still hanging in respect of the nature of the reality declared by the *Upaniṣadic* text. It is called *prameyagata-asambhāvana*. They are removed by *manana*. The identity of the *jīva* and *Brahman* is achieved in a way, which is not opposed to the direct knowledge of the self. Even then the impurities, which closely attach with the *jīva* that the *jīva* is nothing but the physical body still exists. This is known as *viparītabhāvanā*. These impressions are removed by *nididhyāsana*. Then *akhaṇḍākaraṇī* arising from the great sayings of the *Upaniṣads* removes the primal nescience and brings out emancipation.<sup>31</sup>

Now we may conclude with Śaṅkara's interpretation. In his commentary on *Brahmasūtra*, Śaṅkara stresses on linguistic analysis as a means of philosophical enlightenment called '*brahmāvagati*', which is none other than liberation. Here *vākyārthvicāraṇā* or consideration of the meaning of statements has a significant role in the *Advaita Vedānta*. However, it should be kept in mind that *vākyārthavicāraṇā* indicates consideration of the *vedāntic* statements not merely the understanding of any other statements. '*Vākyārtha*' means *mahāvākyārtha* like 'that thou art' and '*vicāraṇā*' implies analysis or critical study of the explicit meaning and implicit meaning of the statement. Not all the statements of *vedāntic* literatures are of the same status. Sometime they indicate something indistinct. As per example whenever there is any talk of creation i.e. *Brahmapariṇāma* actual purport indicates something quite different from what they actually signify viz. the realization of non-duality of *Advaitin*. Therefore, statements speaking of *pariṇāma* are significant as far as they help us to realize the identity of *Brahman* and *ātman*,

which alone liberates us. Therefore, *mahāvākyas* have a special privilege status in *Advaita Vedānta* as far as *brahmāvagati* is concerned. *Advaitins* boldly claimed that when we get rid of the *avidyā* and its multiple forms through analysis of the *mahāvākya* like *Tattvamasi* we ultimately realize the unity of all existence. Analysis of *Tattvamasi* becomes necessary for eradication of ignorance.<sup>32</sup>

### Our observation

The *Advaitins* have interpreted the *mahāvākya* in various ways. It has been taken as an instance of *bhāgalakṣaṇā* or *jahadajahatlakṣaṇā* because in this case there is the relation of identity between ‘*tvam*’ (individual self) and ‘*Tat*’ (Supreme Self) as far as their consciousness part is concerned. As an individual self (*jīva*) and *Brahman* are conscious, there is identity between them. At the same time, there lies a difference also as far as their power is concerned. An individual being has less quantity of power while *Brahman* is associated with unlimited power. In other words, an individual being is has limited or less knowledge (*alpañjnata*) while divine being is having unlimited knowledge or omniscience (*sarvajñata*). Though there is similarity between two there is also difference which described by the *Vedāntins* as ‘*bhedasahiṣṭurabheda*’ or identity marked by difference.

The *Advaitins* have used the sentences like *Tattvamasi* etc. as instance of both *lakṣaṇā* and *nirvikalpakapratyakṣa* (indeterminate perception), which establish that such type of cognition, belongs to both perception and verbal testimony. However, the *mahāvākya*, which is taken an instance of *jahadajahallakṣaṇā*, cannot be taken as an instance of *nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa*. It has been shown that any relation between *viśeṣya* and *viśeṣaṇa* does not vitiate such indeterminate

perception and hence it should be taken as having indivisible holistic meaning (*akhaṇḍa-vākyārtha*). Such cognition is taken as *vaiśiṣṭya-anavagāhī* i.e. not abiding in relation between *viśeṣya* and *viśeṣaṇa*, which entails that no relationship can be found between two relata. For this reason, the meaning of the sentence is taken holistically without any decision.

If the above-mentioned status of *mahāvākya* is taken into account, how can it be interpreted as *bhāgalakṣaṇā* or *jahat-ajahat-lakṣaṇā*? Because, such *lakṣaṇā* presupposes the identity relation between individual being and Divine being, this is obviously a relation. If it is admitted then the theory of *akhaṇḍavākyārtha* must be ruled out. The problem lies on the fact that how can a same instance be interpreted as *nirvikalpakapratyakṣa* and *jahat-ajahat-lakṣaṇā*? The contradiction may be removed if this *mahāvākya* is interpreted as *lakṣaṇā* but not *nirvikalpakapratyakṣa* after considering large import of the same.

The *mahāvākya* is efficacious in realizing *Brahman*. When an individual has a realization that he is the part of the divine, he has a direct realization of him, which is described by the *Advaitins* as *śabdāparokṣavāda* or *śabdajanyapratyakṣavāda*. Though the *mahāvākya* is instrumental to the immediate knowledge of *Brahman*, it is a testimonial perception as per their description. They have cited another example ‘you are the tenth’ (*daśamastvamasi*) to justify the present case. One can know himself as ‘tenth’ after being pointed out by someone with the sentence ‘you are the tenth’. In this case, there is a perceptual cognition no doubt, but it is not caused by sense organ, but by testimony. Hence, the knowledge of divinity through the *mahāvākya* is taken as ‘testimonial perception’, may be described as neither perception nor testimony. In such case, we have to accept a peculiar type of *pramāṇa*, which is never enumerated in their list, which again leads us to contradiction. In order to avoid this it is better to admit testimonial cognition in such

cases. We may say that the essential identity, which is thown through the *jahadjahallakṣaṇā*, first, is realized through perception. Though the proprerty of being generated through verbal testimony is there, it ultimately culminates in the level of the immediate realization (perception) of the identity between an individual self and *Brahman*. Such theory is also applicable to the experience like ‘you are the tenth’. That is why; it is rightly described as *śābdāparokṣavāda* by the *Advaitins*.

## References:

1. *Yathā soumya ekena mṛtipiṇḍena sarvām mṛmmayam vijñātam syāt  
vācārambhaṇāmbikāro nāmadhyeām mṛtiketyeba satyam”/ Ch.Up. 6.1.4*  
  
*Upanisat Saṁgrahamḥ*, ed. Prof. J.L.Sastri (containing 188 upanisads) (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), p. 66.
2. *Ratnaprabhā* commentary on *Brahmasūtra*1.1.2 (commentary wrote by Govindananda)  
  
Bādarāyaṇa, *Vedāntadarśan*, trans. Viswarupananda (Kolkata: Udbodhan Karyalaya, 1999), p.106
3. Swami Satprkasananda, *Methods of Knowledge* (Mayabati: Advaita Ashrama, 2005), pp.173-174.
4. *Atra vākyam dvibidham-saṁsṛṣṭārtham akhaṇḍārtham ca iti tatra  
saṁsṛṣṭārthamakhaṇḍārtham ca iti/ Tatrasaṁsṛṣṭārthasamsargagocara  
pratīti janakam, yathā ‘gāmānaya’ ityādi/ akhaṇḍārtham tu saṁsargagocara  
pratīti janakam yathāpraṣṭaprakāśaḥcandraḥ ityādi...tattvamasi vākyam api  
svarūpamātra vivakṣayaprayuktvatvāt akhaṇḍārtham iti.../ Bālbodhinī of  
Vedāntasāra*113.  
  
Sadānandayogīndra, *Vedāntasāra*, trans. & ed. Bramacārī Medhācāitanya (Kolkata: Adyāpīṭha, 2010), p.141.
5. *Akhaṇḍārthavodhakam iti saṁsargagocarapramiti viśayabodhakam/ Bālbodhinī of  
Vedāntasāra*113. *ibid.*,p.141
6. *Jagato yadupādānam māyāmādaya tāmasīm /nimittam śuddha sasattvām  
tāmucyatebrahma tadgirā// Pañcadaśī 1.44. yadā malina sattvām tam kāma karmādi*

*dūṣitam/ādatte tatparambrahma tvam padena tadocyate// Pañcadaśī 1.45 ekatā  
gṛhyateh asiti tadeaikyamnubhūyatām/Pañcadaśī 5.6*

Vidyāraṇyamuni, *Pañcadaśī*, trans. Swami Swahananda (Madras: Sri  
RamakrishnaMath, 1975), p.21, 22, 124.

7. *Vinna pravṛttinimittanam śabdānam ekasmin arthe tātparyasambandha-  
sāmānādhikaraṇyam/Subodhinī of Vedāntasāra 114.*

Sadānandayogīndra, *Vedāntasāra*, trans. &ed. Bramacari Medhacaitanya, op.cit.,p.142.

8. *Tattvamasi iti vākyeopi parokṣatva sarvajñatvādivaiśiṣṭam  
tatpadeapravṛttinimittamaparokṣtva kincitijñatvādivaiśiṣṭam tvampadapravṛtti  
nimittam tathā ca vinnapadapravṛtti nimittayo tattvampadayoḥ ekasmin caitanya  
tātparyasambandhaḥ sāmānādhikaraṇyam iti arthaḥ/Subodhinī of Vedāntasāra 114*

Sadānandayogīndra, *Vedāntasāra*, ibid.,p.142.

9. *Caturdhā hi sāmānādhikaraṇyam/adhyāse idam rajatam ityādau, bādhāyām'stāṇuḥ  
puman' ityebmādaḥ, viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhābena 'nīlamutpalam' ityādau, abheden  
tattvamasi ityebmādaḥ//*

Madhusūdan Sarasvatī, *Advaitasiddhi*, (Bombay: Nirnaysagar Press, 1917), p.425.

10. *Viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāvasambandhastu yathā tatraiva vākye sa-śabdārtha-  
tatkālviśiṣṭadevadattasya ayam-śabdārtha Gangāghoṣayoh  
adhārādheyabhāvalakṣaṇasya vākyārthasya aśeṣataḥ viruddhatvāt vākyārtham  
aśeṣataḥ parityajya tatsambandhitiralaksanaya yuktatvat jahallakṣaṇā  
samgacchate/Vedāntasāra 115*

Sadānandayogīndra, *Vedāntasāra*, trans. & ed. Bramacārīmedhācāitanya,  
op.cit.,p.143

11. *Lakṣaṇābījantu tātparyānupapattireva, na tu anvayānupapattiḥ/ Vedānta Paribhāṣā, āgama parichheda*

Dharmarājā Adhvarīndra, *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*, trans. & ed. Swāmī Madhavananda, (Mayabati: Advaita Ashrama, 2000), p.102.

12. *Vācyārtham aśeṣataḥ parityajya tat sambandhini arthāntare vṛttiḥ jahallakṣaṇā/ Vidvanmanorañjinī of Vedāntasāra* 116, Sadānandayogīndra, *Vedāntasāra*, trans. & ed. Bramacārī medhācāitanya, op.cit., p.145.

13. *Vācyārthaparityagena tatsambandhini vṛttiḥ jahallakṣaṇā / ibid.*, p.145.

14. *Vācyārthaikadeśaparityāgena ekadeśavṛttiḥ jahadjahallakṣaṇā / ibid.*, p.145.

15. *Asmin vākye 'nīlam utpalam' itivākyavat vākyārthaḥ na sangachhate/ tatra tu nīlapadārtha-nīlaguṇasya utpalpadārthotpaldravyasya ca śauklyapatādibheda-byābartkatayā anyonyaviśeṣaṇaviśeṣyarūpa-saṃsargasya anyataraviśiṣṭasya anyatarasya tadaikyasya vā, vākyārthatvāngīkaraṇe pramāṇantarvirodhābhābat vākyārthaḥ sangachhate/ ibid.*, p.145.

16. *Atra tu tatpadarthaparokṣatvādiviśiṣṭacāitanyasya tvam-padārthāparo ṣ atvādiviśiṣṭacāitanyasya ca anyonyabhedavyavartkatayā viśeṣaṇāviśiṣṭabhābasansargasya, anyataraviśiṣṭasya anyatarasya tadaikasya vā vākyārthatvāngīkāre pratyakṣādi pramāṇavirodhāt vākyārthaḥ na sangachhate/-Vedāntasāra* 117, *ibid.*, p.145.

17. *Pañcadaśī* 7/75

Vidyāraṇyamuni, *Pañcadaśī*, trans. Swami Swahananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1975), p.264.

18. *Atra tu parokṣatvāparokṣatvādiviśiṣṭa caitanyaikatvarūpasya vākyārthasya  
bhāgamātrevirodhāt bhāgāntaramapi parityajya annyalakṣaṇ āyā ayuktatvāt  
jahallakṣaṇā nasamgacchate/ Vedāntasāra*118

Sadānandayogīndra, trans. & ed. Bramacārī Medhācaitanya, op.cit., p.148.

19. *Tatra tīrapadāśravanena tadarthāpratītau tatpratītyapekṣāyām apitat-tvampadayoḥ  
śrūyamāṇatvena tadarthapratītau lakṣaṇayā punaḥ  
anyatarapadenaanyatarapadārthapratītyapekṣābhāvāt/Vedāntasāra*119, ibid., p. 150.

20. *Ttra tu parokṣatvāparokṣatvādiviśiṣṭa caitanyaikatvasya vākyārthasya  
viruddhatvāttadaparityāgena tatsambandhinaḥ yasya kasyacit arthasya  
lakṣitatve'pitadvirodhāparihārāt ajahallakṣaṇā na sambhavatyeva/Vedāntasāra* 120,  
ibid., p.151.

21. *Tattvamasiti vākya tatpadam svārtham parokṣatvādiviśiṣṭam parityajya  
jīvacaitanyam lakṣayatu evam tvampadam api svārtham kinci jñatvādiviśiṣṭam  
parityajya īśvaracaitanyam vā lakṣayatu, -Interpretation of Nṛsiṃhasarasvatī on  
Vedāntasāra* 119, ibid., p.150.

22. *Ekena padena svārthāśa-padārthantarobhayalakṣaṇāyā asambhavāt,  
padāntareṇa tadarthapratītau lakṣaṇayā punaḥ  
anyatarapadārthapratītyapekṣābhāvātca/Vedāntasāra* 121, ibid., p.152.

23. *Tattvamasya divākyaṣya apiparokṣatvāparokṣatvādiviśiṣṭa  
caitanyaikatvalaksannamukhyārthapratipādakatvāsambhavāt jahada jahat lakṣaṇayā  
viruddhaparokṣatvāparokṣatvādiviśiṣṭyāśa parityāgena aviruddhākhaṇḍacaitanyam  
ātrapratipādakatvam/Interpretation of Nṛsiṃhasarasvatī on Vedāntasāra*122., ibid., p.  
154.



24. *So'yaṁ devadattaḥ*" - " *tattvamasi*" *ityādou viśiṣṭavācaka padānāmekadeśaparātveopi nalakṣṇā, śaktyupastitaviśiṣṭayoḥ abhedānvayānupapattou viśeṣyayoḥ śaktayupastitayoreba abhedānuvyāvirodhāt/ Yathā "ghatonityaḥ" ityatra 'ghata'-padavācyaikadeśaghattvasyāyogytveopi yogyaghatavyaktyā sahānityatvānvayaḥ/yatra padārthaikadeśasya viśeṣaṇa tayopastitiḥ, tatraiba, svātantreṇa upastitaye lakṣaṇavyupagamaḥ/ Yathā 'nitya ghataḥ' ityatra 'ghataḥ'-padātghatatvasya śaktyā svātantreṇānupastityā tādṛśopastityarthe 'ghata'-padasya ghatatvelakṣṇā/ Ebameva 'tattvamasi' ityādivākyeopi na lakṣṇā, śaktyā svātantryeṇopastitayoḥ 'tattvam'-padarthyorbhedānuaye bādhakābhāvāt/ Anyaathā 'geha ghataḥ', 'ghate rūpam', 'ghatamānaya' ityādou ghatagehatvāderbhimātamvayavodhāyoghyotayā tatrāpi 'ghatā' dipadānām viśeṣyamātraparatvam lakṣaṇaiba syāt/ Tasmāt 'tattvamasi' ityādivākyeṣu ācāryāṇām lakṣaṇoktirbhyupagamvādena vodhyā/" *Vedānta Paribhāṣā, Āgama parichheda**

Dharmaraja Adhvarindra, *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, trans. Swami Madhavananda (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2000) p.99.

25. *ebam ca śabdapramāṇam svabiśayabiśayaka jñānajanayam parokṣapramāṇe*  
*janayati nāparokṣapramāṇa heturiti bhābaḥ/ Kalpataruparimala*

Appaya Dīkṣita, *Kalpataruparimala* (Bombay: Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1938), p.56.

26. *ātmābhasasya jībasya saṁsāro nātmabastunaḥ/ Pañcadaśī 6.11*

Vidyāraṇyamuni, *Pañcadaśī*, trans. Swami Swahananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1975), p.129.

27. *sambidāparokṣyaam nakaraṇviśeṣanibandhanam kintuprameyaviśeṣa nibandhanam iti upapāditam/ tathā brahmaṇḥ pramāṇjībāvinnatayā tadgocaram śabdajanyam jñānamapi aparokṣam/ Vedāntaparibhāṣā,*

Dharmaraja Adhvarindra, *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, trans. Swami Madhavananda, op.cit., p.207.

28. *śrūtvācāryaprasādena dṛa bodho yadā bhabet/ nirastāśeṣasaṁsārnidāṇḥ puruṣastadā//vākyavṛtti 52*

Śaṁkaracārya, *Vākyavṛtti*, Swami Jagadananda (Chennai: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 2004), p.32.

29. *Gitā* 6.19.

*Bhagabadgītā*, (with Madhusūdan Sasvatī's Gūḍārthadīpikā) trans. Swami Gambhirananda (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2013), p.419.

30. *vākyamapṛati baddham sat prāk parokṣāvabhāsite/karāmalaka vad bodham aparokṣam prasūyate//Pañcadaśī 1.62*

Vidyāranyamuni, *Pañcadaśī*, trans. Swami Swahananda, op.cit., p.30.

31. *parokṣajñānato naśyedasattāvṛtīhetutā/aparokṣajñānāśyāhi āvānāvṛtīhetutā//Pañcadaśī 7.45, ibid., p.250.*

32. *Śaṁkarabhāṣya on Brahmasūtra 1.1.2*

*The Brahmasūtra Śaṁkarabhāṣya with the commentaries Bhāmati, Kalpataru and Parimala*, vol-1, ed. K.L.Joshi (Delhi: Parimal Publications, 2007), p.82.

## **Fourth Chapter**

### **Metaphysical significance of *Tattvamasi* from the *Dvaita Vedāntins*' point of view**

There are five schools of thought within the aegis of the *Dvaita Vedānta* tradition. These are-the *Śrī-Vaiṣṇava* tradition of Rāmānuja, the *Brahma-Vaiṣṇava* tradition of Madhva, the *Sanakādi-Vaiṣṇava* tradition of Nimbārka, the *Rudhra-Vaiṣṇava* tradition of Vallabha and the *Gauriya-Vaiṣṇava* tradition of Śrī Caitanyadeva. Their philosophical viewpoint is theistic realism. They all reject the monistic idealism of Śaṅkara which belives in the reality of *Brahman* alone and the falsity of the world. However, these five schools have their differences too as they produce various shades of theistic realism. They stress on theistic realism and they all unanimously reject the monistic idealistic approach of Śaṅkara, which believes in the reality of *Brahman* alone and falsity of the world and identity between individual self and Universal Self. The tradition of Rāmānuja and Madhva hold to what might be called the '*Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa*' concept of the *Vaiṣṇavism* which upholds the supremacy of '*Viṣṇu*' and '*Śrī*' as the sovereign Lord and Lady of the universe with its corollary concepts of '*aiśvaryabhakti*' characterized by the master-servant relationship between the deity and the devotee. The tradition of Nimbārka and Vallabha hold the '*Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa*' concept of the *Vaiṣṇavism* which upholds the supremacy of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā as sovereign Lord and Lady of the *Vaiṣṇavism* with its corollary concept of '*maryādābhakti*' characterized by the love-beloved relationship between the Deity and the devotee. Each of its branches has its unique elucidation regarding *Tattvamasi*. An attempt to bring out the significance of *Tattvamasi* in different schools is not an easy job. We only confine our discussion on Rāmānuja (1017-1137 C.E.), Nimbārka (13<sup>th</sup> Century C.E.), Madhva (1238-1317 C.E.) and

Vallabha (1479-1532 C.E.). The identification of *jīva* and *Brahman* has not been well accepted by the *Daitavedāntins*. Only in the *Advaita Vedānta*, *jīva* is always identical with *Brahman*. *Jīva* is always of the nature of *nitya*, *śuddha*, *buddha*, *mukta*, *para brahman svarūpa*. Due to the influence of *māyā* or *avidyā*, *jīva* assumes himself as different from *Brahman* and thinks himself as *baddha* or *saṁsarī*. However, the *Dvaitavedāntins* do not accept such view. We are going to discuss that how *Tattvamasi* has been explained in different branches of different schools of the *Dvaita Vedānta*. However, comparative discussion is not our immediate aim. In this chapter, we try to highlight on the *Dvaitavādins* views regarding *Tattvamasi* and show their philosophical significance. We only write few lines about the main tenets of each school briefly and then their special contribution on the explanation of the *Vedic* dictum *Tattvamasi*.

## Section-I

### Rāmānujācārya's view on *Tattvamasi*

Rāmānuja was the best exponent of the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy. The doctrine amalgamates the spiritual monism and the cult of devotion (*bhakti*). The doctrine based on the famous 'prasthānatraya', namely *Brahmasūtras*, the *Upaniṣads* and *Bhagavadgītā* as well as divine *Prabandham* of *Ālvārs*, *Āgamas* specially and the *purāṇas*. Before discussing the *Viśiṣṭādvaitavādin's* view on *Tattvamasi*, we are going to write few lines about the main tenets of the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* doctrine.

According to Rāmānuja *Brahman* is a self-synthetic whole with *cit* and *acit* as his components. In the system of Rāmānuja *Brahman* is qualified by *cit* and *acit* and that is why this philosophical system is known as the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* or qualified monism. *Brahman* is always

qualified by the individual selves and matters. He does not exist without being qualified by them. Thus, *Brahman* with *cit* and *acit* as its *prakāras* or attributes is the only reality and Rāmānuja's system is therefore called the *Viśiṣṭādvaita*.<sup>1</sup>

Rāmānuja has identified absolute with God of religion who is worshipped by human beings. *Brahman* denotes the highest *puruṣa*, *Puruṣottama*, or *Nārāyaṇa* (*Hari*) in whom all types of the blemishes are by nature expelled. He possesses unlimited, unsurpassed innumerable auspicious qualities. As being associated with the quality of magnitude everywhere, the word '*Brahman*' understood. He is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, truth, consciousness and bliss. He endows with all auspicious qualities, which are eternal and natural. He is Lord of all and superior to all. Wherever *Brahman* is defined as *nirguṇa*, it is because he is free from all false and finite or impure qualities and not because of that; he is devoid of all qualities. Rāmānuja declares in the *Śrībhāṣya* that the word '*Brahman*' denotes the Highest Person who is by nature devoid of all evil and possesses a host of auspicious qualities, which are innumerable and unsurpassed in excellence.<sup>2</sup> *Brahman* or *Īśvara* is real eternal and independent. The self and matter are also real and eternal but their reality is utterly dependent on that of *Īśvara*. *Cit* and *acit* are not essentially the same as *Brahman* they have existence only as the body of *Brahman*. *Īśvara* is the material cause because *cit* and *acit* constitute his body. He is efficient cause too because he creates, controls the world. Out of delight, God creates, sustains and finally destroys His own creation. *Cit* and *acit* constitute the universe. They exist in two different conditions-

- Casual condition
- Effect condition

In the casual condition or the *kāraṇavasthā* they are undivided, exist in subtle state and when wills to create the subtle matter becomes gross, selves are materialized and simply under divine influence creation starts. Therefore, in the unmanifested condition *Brahman* is defined as *kāraṇavasthā* and in the manifested state as the *kāryāvasthā*.

According to Rāmānuja, the self is said to be a part of *Brahman* in the sense of modes of *Brahman*. Individual selves are not independent of *Īśvara*; all his activities are inspired by the *antaryāmin*. According to the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* system, *mokṣa* is not considered as *jīvabrahmaikya* but *jīvas*' release from earthly limitations. Rāmānuja does not admit *sālokya*<sup>3</sup> or *sāmīpya*<sup>4</sup> kind of liberation, rather he stresses on *sājujya mukti*.<sup>5</sup> The released self attains the nature of *Īśvara* though not identified with Him. He attains to companionship with *Īśvara* after all the actions are exhausted and the physical body is thrown off. According to Rāmānuja in the released state individual self experiences its identity with *Brahman* as a mode, although being non-different from, it is said to be similar to *Brahman*. Individual self enjoys purity, which is similar to *Brahman*. *Jīva* remains as a *prakāra* or mode of *Brahman* in released state also and therefore although being non-different it is different too.

Now we set back at our main discussion regarding *Tattvamasi*. The way through which Śrī Rāmānuja and his followers interpret the famous text *Tattvamasi* is unique. The *Advaitins* stress on the fact that what conveyed by the dictum is *svarūpaikyam*. Rāmānuja and his followers like Vedāntadeśika (13<sup>th</sup> Century) arise some allegations in the *Advaita* interpretation, like violation of *sāmānādhikarāṇya*, *lakṣaṇā doṣam* etc. Following mainly Śrībhāṣya, the commentary of *Brahmasūtra* and *Vedārthasaṃgraha* we will go to produce some glimpses of their objections.

Rāmānuja and his followers claimed that the *sāmānādhikaraṇyam* as defined by *vaiyākaraṇa* is not properly followed by the *Advaitins*. In his ‘*Vedārthasaṃgraha*’, Rāmānuja stated

*Sāmānādhikaraṇyaam hi dvayoh padayoh/*

*Prakārdvaymukhena ekārtham nisthatvam//*

It means when two words denote the same object by denoting the object through the each of the different qualities of the object then those words called *Sāmānādhikaraṇyam* or coordinate predication. To put it another words simply say to express one thing subsisting in a twofold form is co-ordination. If such double form is abandoned, there could be no difference as aspects giving rise to the application of different terms and the entire principle of co-ordination would thus be given up. Here ‘*That*’ means *Brahman* who is omniscient, truth, cause of the universe because *Śruti* introduced such *Brahman* through the passage “it though may I be many” and ‘*tVAM*’ refers the idea of *Brahman* having for its body the individual selves connected with non-intelligent matter. The *jīva* is a body or mode of *Brahman* who is different from *Brahman* as well as inseparable from *Brahman*. On the other hand, ‘*Tat*’ denotes the *Brahman* by his qualities like being the cause of the universe, having the universe as his body mode. ‘*Tvam*’ denotes the same *Brahman* by his quality of having the *jīvas* as his mode. The *Advaitin*’s interpretation does not hold well as per their identity of *Brahman* and *jīva* is concerned. The *Advaitic* application of *Sāmānādhikaraṇyam* violates the rule of the same.<sup>6</sup>

There exists not even a single reason why *lakṣaṇā* needs to be hold as told by the *Advaita*. On the other hand, the meaning as told by the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* is not in any way unsuitable to the context. Only the natural meaning of the terms considers and *lakṣaṇā* never arises in this context. There is no contradiction considering a single person namely Devadatta to be linked with two instances of

time say past and present in two different places. The *Śruti* has declared that all the entities namely *cit*, *acit* and *Īśvara* are eternally existing real entities. Devadatta stayed at a place in the morning and he is now another place in the evening. There is absolutely no place for *lakṣaṇā* at all. The differences in places do not differentiate the person Devadatta because the time linked with his presence in each places are also different. No doubt the contradiction will arise only it was told 'I am Devadatta' in a given single instance of time simultaneously at two different places. However, in the case of 'this is that Devadatta' there has no room for *lakṣaṇā*. In the same manner, here also, it has been pointed out that there is no contradiction in the Supreme *Brahman*, who is the cause of the world, being also the self of the *jīva* or the individual self as his inner ruler.<sup>7</sup>

In the sentence '*Thou art that*' were meant to express absolute oneness, it would occur '*upakrama virodham*' error also. In the *Pūrvamīmāṃsā*, a *nyāya* is ascertained. In the given set of *śāstra*-verses in a particular concept, the meaning told by these verses in the end has to be in agreement with the meaning told by the verses in the beginning tell that the *Brahman* has the infinite attributes like '*satyasamkalpatvam, jagatkāraṇatvam*'. The verse, which this *sat-vidyā* ends, is *Tattvamasi*. The *Advaitins* by violating of the *upkramanyāya* claim that '*Tat tvam asi*' conveys '*jīvabrahmaikyam*'. In the beginning, the *Brahman* is described as the cause of the universe, having infinite power, knowledge. However, the *jīvātman* is not cause of the universe rather the *Brahman* creates the *jīvātman* and he being ignorant of his nature suffers in the *saṁsāra*. If the interpretation of *Tattvamasi* given by the *Advaitins* is accepted that *jīvātman* and *Brahman* are one and the same then the *Brahman* will become ignorant and suffer in the *saṁsāra*. Thus the *Advaitins* interpretation has '*upakrama virodham*'.<sup>8</sup>



In the case of ‘*Tattvamasi*’, ‘*Tat*’ signifies *Brahman* as the ultimate cause of the world, the abode of all auspicious qualities. ‘*Tvam*’ signifies the same *Brahman* who has the individual self. However, *Brahman* is the inner ruler of the individual self. *Brahman* itself signified as the inner ruler of the *jīva* as possessed of it as its body, as existing within the *jīva* as its self and as possessing the *jīva* as its mode. Therefore, the primary denotation does not hamper. The text makes declaration about one substance distinguished by two aspects. Therefore, the principle of coordination is preserved. *Brahman* devoid of all imperfections having all auspicious qualities is the inner ruler of the individual selves and possesses lordly power. Not only that rather it satisfies the demand of agreement with the previous portion of the section. It satisfies the promise of the declaration ‘*ekavijñane sarvavijñānam...*’ as *Brahman* having for its body all intelligent and non-intelligent beings in their gross state is the effect of *Brahman* having for its body the same things in their subtle state. This interpretation avoids all conflict with other scriptural passages like ‘*tamīśvaranam paramam maheśvaram ...*’ (*Śvt.Up.* 6.7.8), ‘*apahatampāpamsatyakāma satyasaṁkalpaḥ*’ (*Ch.Up.* 8.1.5).

An opponent may ask which of the two terms is meant to make an original ascertain with regard to the other? Rāmānuja answered that the text does not mean to make an original ascertain and the truth have been already established which is stated by the preceding context... ‘in that this entire world has its self.’ It predicates of ‘all this’ (the entire world) together with all individuals selves that ‘*Tat*’ i.e. *Brahman* is the self of it.<sup>9</sup>

Rāmānuja does not believe in the ‘unqualified identity’ between individual self and *Brahman*. He tries to maintain the reality of the individual self and the physical world along with the reality of *Brahman*. Although he does not accept the doctrine of absolute non-duality but according to him,

self and the world are included within the unity of *Brahman*. Rāmānuja argues that God is the cause of all and free from all imperfections. He resolved to be many and there upon sent forth the world and introduced the individual selves. The individual self has God as its self and that indicates that He is innerself of the self but not identical with it. The relation of individual self and matter to God is like that of body to the self. This relation has been described as ‘*apṛthaksiddhi*’. According to Rāmānuja, God and self are inseparably related. The relation of ‘*apṛthaksiddhi*’ is not something outside rather it is contained in the very being of the two. God is the indwelling spirit of the self. It is within the nature of the two to be inseparably related. It is quiet the relation between them does not exist somewhere outside them but still it is real. It is very inherent in the nature of the two. In the same manner, the selves are dependent on God and *apṛthaksiddha* from God.

## Section-II

### Nimbārka-cārya’s view on *Tattvamasi*

Nimbārka-cārya was one of the five principal commentators of the *Brahmasūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa and the first systematic profounder of one of the five main schools of the *Vedānta*. Generally, he supposed to have flourished after Rāmānuja in eleventh century C. E. though no definite evidence is available on this regard. Nimbārka’s views can be known from three writings of which the most important are the *Vedānta-pārijāta-sourava* (the commentary of *Brahmansūtra*), *Daśaślokī* etc. Philosophical doctrine of Nimbārka is known as the *Dvaitādvaita* or the theory of dualistic non-dualism. We just see the main tenets of this system and then discuss on their interpretation on *Tattvamasi*. According to Nimbārka, there are three equally real and co-eternal realities-

- *Brahman* (*Brahman* is controller or *niyantr*)
- The *cit* ( the *cit* is the enjoyer or *bhakt*)
- The *acit* ( the object enjoyed or *bhogy*)

Like the other *Vedāntins*, Nimbārka calls the highest reality is *Brahman*, literally means the greatest being –one, which is unsurpassed great in nature and qualities-beyond any limit what so ever. To Nimbārka, *Brahman* is a personal God, and not like the impersonal absolute of Śaṅkara. Nimbārka identifies the highest *Brahman* with lord *Kṛṣṇa*, who has been predicated to be *Ramākānta* and *Puruṣottama*.<sup>10</sup> He is possessed of infinite natural power and attribute like omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence and the rest. However, the other *Vaiṣṇava Vedāntins* like Rāmānuja and Madhva consider *Brahman* as *Naārāyaṇa* or *Hari*. *Brahman*, is the highest reality, lord of all, controller of all, unsurpassed greatness of his nature and qualities beyond any limit of any kind of space, time or thing, cause of the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. He is the material and efficient cause of the universe. He is the transcendental and immanent. He is the inner self, inner controller and constant sustainer of his own creation.<sup>11</sup> *Brahman* is essentially possessed of infinite number of auspicious qualities, which again are of two kinds-omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, beauty, bliss, tenderness, devoid of all that is inauspicious, unworthy and defective.<sup>12</sup> Like the other *Vaiṣṇava Vedāntins*, Nimbārka too claimed that *Brahman* is described as *nirguṇa* or attribute less in the sense of lacking of ordinary material inauspicious qualities. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* possesses infinite number of auspicious qualities, pure, complete, independent, self-sufficient and free from all blemishes. Out of His own free will He creates, the world of plurality to establish morality. In a word, the individual self is a self-conscious intelligent principle, a knower, a doer and an enjoyer. Selves are the essentially under the control of the Lord. When it becomes free and comes to attain similarity with Him, it remains

under His control. The universe is the transformation or the *pariṇāma* of *Brahman*. *Brahman* is both material cause and efficient cause of the world. The *Upaniṣad* says that it is by ‘divine will’ that this world of name and form has come into existence. Therefore, *Brahman* is non-different material cause of the universe. Just as by one clod of clay all that is made of clay, becomes know, so also when *Brahman* is known, everything is known. *Śruti* firmly declares the oneness of *Brahman* and the universe. *Brahman* is the efficient cause of the universe too. Creation is the cosmic game in which *Brahman* indulges. He has no imperfection and has nothing to desire. Scripture declares firmly that he creates the universe mere sport.<sup>13</sup> In accordance with the law of *karmas* he controls the destinies of the individual selves. The relation between the *Brahman* and the universe is too similar to the case of the serpent and the coil. Though the serpent is one as a whole, yet is different as possessing different forms like coil.<sup>14</sup>

According to Nimbārka and his followers like Śrinivāsācārya, Puruṣottamaṇi etc. we are going to discuss on the meaning of *Tattvamasi*. In the text *Tattvamasi*, ‘*Tat*’ denotes the omniscient, omnipotent, supreme lord and ‘*tvam*’ denotes the individual self and ‘*asi*’ indicates a relation between them. Nimbārka and his followers propagate the relation of difference and non-difference between God and the individual self. There are essential differences between them-

- *Brahman* is the cause and self is the effect. As there is a difference between the cause and its effect like the sea and its waves, between the sun and its rays, *jīva* is different from *Brahman*. *Brahman* is the whole and individual self His parts. Part and whole will never be identical.

- *Brahman* is considered as object of worshipped, the object to be known and object to be attend. On the other hand, self is the knower, the worshipper who attains God's grace. There will be no doubt a difference exists between worshipped and worshipper.
- *Brahman* is the inner controller dwells within the individual self and controls it. The controller and controlled must be different.
- *Brahman* the all pervading possesses of the power of creation, preservation and destruction but *jīva* fails to do such actions.
- Freed self similar to *Brahman* but differs from him. *Mokṣa* means becoming like the God. It means attaining similarly with him in nature and qualities and it is possible only due to the grace of God. However, freed self never possesses the power of creating, maintaining, which belongs to the God alone. *Mokṣa* never implies any identity between them or any annihilation of the individuality of the self. Therefore, the freed self is similar to the God without losing its own nature and individuality.
- *Brahman* is essential superior to the individual self. Therefore, they are not identical.

On the other hand, non-difference is also true. Individual self or *jīva* is *abhinna* or identical to *Brahman*. Just like between the sea and its rays the *jīva* is different and non-different from *Brahman*. Just as the coil is nothing but the snake, yet different from it, just as the ray is nothing but the sun, yet different from it, just as the different kind of stones, though nothing but earth, are yet different from it. The selves and *Brahman* though nothing but *Brahman* are different from Him because of their own peculiar nature and attributes. Difference is true as well as non-difference is also true.

The self as effects and parts of *Brahman* are distinct from Him. The effect and cause, the part and whole are neither absolutely distinct nor absolutely non-distinct but the relation between them is a relation of both difference and non-difference (*bhedābheda*). Thus, the relation between *Brahman* and *jīva* is a relation of natural difference and non-difference (*svābhāvika bhedābheda*).

The relation is further clarified by Śrīnivāsa in his commentary “*Vedāntakaustuva*”. He argued that the individual self is none other than part (*aṁśa*) of *Brahman*. The part is to be admitted in the sense of *śakti* (power) and not as real part cut-off from the whole. The relation between them is also clarified to that between *guṇa* and *guṇī* (attribute and substratum of attribute). *Guṇa* is different from *guṇī*, which is different in nature as well as being inseparable from *guṇī*. It is non-different too. The author of “*Vedāntakaustubha*” exemplifies that the earthly modifications namely rubies, diamonds, made of the earth, are non-different from it but in nature, these are different. The same is in the case of tree and leaves, sea and its waves and so on. With the help of such types of instances, Śrīnivāsa try to establish that the relation between *jīva* and *Brahman* is that of *svābhāvikabhedābhedavāda*. The relation is called such, since not brought by any *upādhi* or condition on the removal of which it might be ended. Therefore, the difference is true as well as non-difference is also true. The selves as effects and parts of *Brahman* are distinct from him, which is the cause and the whole, but as effects and parts, they are also non-distinct from him. In the light of the above discussion, we may conclude now that –here the term ‘*Tat*’ refers to the Lord, ‘*tvam*’ refers to the self and ‘*asi*’ indicates the relation between them. The relation is that the self is non-different from the Lord which non-difference is compatible with a difference between them. Puruṣottamji, the author of “*Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā*” explained that identity does not depend upon the absolute resemblance or sameness between them but upon the non-

apprehension of the difference. Actually, “this relation is that the soul is non-different from the Lord which non-difference is compatible with a difference between them.”<sup>15</sup>

### Section-III

#### Madhvācāryas’ view on *Tattvamasi*

According to Madhvācārya, there are two kinds of reality- independent (*svatantra*) and dependent (*paratantra*). God the embodiment of infinite, excellence, spiritual qualities is only independent reality free from all imperfections. Individual selves and world are dependent realities. Individual selves or *jīvas* are dependent from God. An absolute identity can never be possible between them. The unique feature of this system is the notion of difference (*bheda*). Difference is five fold.<sup>16</sup>

- God and self
- The different selves
- God and matter
- Self and matter
- Different material objects

Here it should keep in our mind that difference between things does not mean the independence of objects so differentiated, as we find in our experience that one objects depends on another, though they are different. God alone is independent with regard to his nature (*svarūpa*), knowledge (*pramiti*) and action (*pravṛtti*) and everything else exist, known and acts as His will. As we know God is omniscience, omnipresent and perfect on the other hand, the *jīva* has finite knowledge, limited power, and dependent upon God. God alone is the worshipped master and *jīvas* are worshipping servants. According to Madhva, *jīva* and God are absolutely, eternally and essentially different from each other, at all times, places and under all circumstances. The *jīva*

gets release, which is the original state of purity through the grace of God. Even the liberated selves attain similarity with God and never losses its identity in him. The grace of God is won only through the devotion. Madhva and his followers try to establish the supremacy of *bhakti* and its ultimate instrumentality in attaining emancipation.<sup>17</sup> The presupposition led them to profound the philosophy of *jīva* as absolutely distinct and different from *Brahman*. This theory opposed to the *Advaitic* philosophy of the absolute non-difference between *jīva* and *Brahman*. Madhva clearly argued that the unity of *jīva* with God consists of sameness of thought or it may dwell in the same place. Such sameness of habitation is relative to some particular manifestation of the God. It is not the unity of essential being. Even the emancipated individual self is different from Him. The difference between the two lies in the pre-assumption that the God is being independent and infinite and the individual being finite and dependent.<sup>18</sup> The dictum *Tattvamasi* does not convey any identity of the self with God. Here ‘*Tat*’ signifies eternally unknown and the word ‘*tvam*’ signifies knowable entity. How identity would be possible between them? Therefore, it is not the import of the *Śruti*. Arising this question, Madhva hides his own view. This dictum *Tattvamasi* indicates mere similarity. It has to be taken to mean God and the *jīva* are similar to and not identical with one another. *Ācārya* cites an example to establish his view and the text is “*ādityo yūpa*”. The sun is sacrificial post. The proposition of the *Śruti*, “he who knows *Brahman* becomes *Brahman*” is similar to the saying that even a *śudra* by worshipping a *brāhmaṇa* with devotion, becomes developed and the worshipper of a *brāhmaṇa* certainly does not become the *brāhmaṇa* himself. Similarly, the identity between ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*tvam*’ is impossible. It only indicates that the *jīva* attains ‘similarity’ with God. The import lies in ‘similarity’ nor upon ‘identity’.<sup>19</sup>



Madhva argued that some of *jīvātmāns*’ essential qualities like *jñāna* and *ānanda* are akin to those of *Brahman*. On that basis, *jīva* is sometimes spoken of as identical with *Brahman*. “...*tadguṇa sārātvāt tu tadvyapadeśaḥ*”(Brahmasūtra 2.3.29). The *Śruti* speak of the oneness of *jīva* and *Brahman*. On the basis of the former’s bearing some measure of similarity to *Brahman* and the primacy of and the independence of *Brahman*. They do not speak anywhere of their identity of essence. According to Madhva, the ultimate unity of the individual self with *Brahman* is similarity of cognition. ‘Similarity of cognition’ means the knowledge, which possesses the *jīva* similar to the knowledge possesses God. However, the difference is that *jīva* is unable to acquire the knowledge, which God possesses. Even it is true for the freed self. Secondly, the ‘ultimate unity’ indicates that *jīva* may entrance into the ‘*golokdham*’. Establishing another implication of the text *Tattvamasi* Madhva divided the sentence as “*atat tvam asi*”. It is well known to all that God is superior to individual soul. “*Attvamasi*” means – *jīva* you are not the God because lack of such qualities. In thus way, the difference is established and the identification eradicated properly (utterly).<sup>20</sup>

Madhvācārya in his commentary on *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* and his book “*Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya*” has adopted the advice as ‘*atat tvam asi*’ and analysed carefully the Uddālaka-Śvetaketu discourse. Following Madhvācārya respectfully, famous commentators like Jayatīrtha, Rāghavendrayati clearly establish the thesis of difference and individuals’ dependence on God.

In the eight section of the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, it proclaims that the individual selves are different from and dependent upon the Supreme *Brahman*. The central teaching of the *Tattvamasi* has advised through the nine illustrative instances. The whole teaching of Uddālaka to his son Śvetaketu is that *jīva* or individual is different from God, and

that the highest duty of *jīva* is to worship God while recognising this difference. By analysing the nine illustrations, Madhva and his followers establish only difference.

The first analogy has given of a bird tied with a string. Analogy is thus-a bird tied with a string, after taking attempt to fly in different directions, but finding no resting place any where, at least comes back at the place where it is tied. Madhva and his followers claimed that every self is such the above bird. All the activities of the *jīvas* are the control of *Brahman* and everyone got resting place in *Brahman* or God alone. In this analogy, there is a difference between *āśraya* and *āśrita*. Therefore, there is a difference between *jīva* and *Brahman*. Uddālaka advised such *bheda* theory. In the walking state, anyone can differentiate himself practically from God but this feeling does not carry on in the state of deep sleep. However, the first analogy explains that even in the state of deep sleep the difference between the individual *jīva* and *Brahman* and his utter dependence on the latter exist. Śaṅkara's theory of identity has no place at all. The *jīvas* in the state of deep sleep are dependent on *Brahman* and hence, they are fundamentally different from him. The highest *Brahman* is the creator of this universe. *Jīva* is being created by Him are subordinate to *Brahman*. Hence, *jīva* is different from and dependent on *Brahman*. In this first illustration of *suṣupti*, the dependence of human self on the seen power of God is vividly brought out. This analogy brings out the utter helplessness of the individual and protective benevolence of the supreme.<sup>21</sup> In our walking state we are inclined to think of ourselves as practically independent beings. This feeling is not there in *suṣupti*. Uddālaka's choice of this state is to make it clear to his son how the individual is under the wings of supreme in this state, finding rest there in the embrace of the supreme free from hundred and one trouble of his dreaming and walking states.

In the ninth section of the *Upaniṣad* gives an example of the juices of various flowers in honey. If *Brahman* is different from the selves then how is it possible that he who dwells in the selves does not perceive as different from them? To overcome this doubt, the second analogy of the juices has given. The bees make honey by collecting the juices from trees (flowers). Though the different juices are present in honey, yet those juices are unable to realize that they belong to that tree or flower. The difference among those juices has not perceived, yet it is there and has not ceased to be. Similarly, all living being have been existing in the Supreme *Brahman* in an inseparable relation during deep sleep but they do not belong to their individuality. The difference between *jīva* and *Brahman* is eternal. However, *jīva* fails to realize this fact and this failure on their parts leads to transmigration through various births like tiger wolf or bear etc. the wordings shows that the difference is there and has not ceased to be though it is missed.

One may asked that the various juices being incient, might fail to realize their being present in honey. But how is it possible that a sentient fails to realize his presence in God? To remove this doubt, the third analogy of the rivers is given because though sentient unable to realize their distinctive presence in the sea. The sea water where different waters of respective rivers are mingled, is evaporated and the same water falls down to the ground in guise of the rain, then the water flows towards and emptying themselves into the sea. Though these waters being unable to know their individual identity as, ‘it is *Gangā*’ or ‘it is *Yamunā*’ etc., the sea remains distinct and the rivers do remain distinct from the sea and from each other. Similarly, inspite of their origin and their being having resorted to the Supreme *Brahman*, all beings unable to realize their being different from him. Yet the selves remain distinct from *Brahman* and from each other, (these beings that unable to realize their being different from him fall into the circle of transmigration). The statement ‘they emanent from the sea and reach only the sea, the sea remains the sea’ also

establishes the difference. Otherwise, the statement might have been such ‘the rivers become the sea itself’. Therefore, the rivers coming from the sea enter the sea but the sea do remain itself the same, and these rivers do not become the sea.<sup>22</sup>

The question is thus: why is the self-dependent on *Brahman*? To answer this query the analogy of a luxuriant tree has given. If a luxuriant tree is cut at the top or middle or bottom then some juicy things flow out from the wounded place. If the life force gives up the tree, it would dry up and further it would not exude or flow gently the juice when cut. Similarly, if *Brahman*, the life giving principle of all would be absent in the embodied self, then it would have no life at all. Therefore, the individual self is dependent on *Brahman* or God for the sake of his life. Hence, *jīva* is not identical with *Brahman* rather he is dependent on *Brahman* or God for his very existence. The living beings are also metaphysically dependent on the Supreme for their very life and happiness.

The fifth analogy is of the seed of a *nyagrodha* fruit. The seed of a *nyagrodha* fruit, when cut into minute parts cannot be seen because of its subtleness. The seed possesses the potentiality of causing the growth of that mighty *nyagrodha* tree is not visible. One may observe minutely at the seed but not find the life principle of the tree in it. However, it does not mean there is nothing in the inside. Similarly, an ordinary *yogī* may even come to know the *jīva* but fail to realize the Lord who is subtler than *jīva* dwells in it. Though the power of the Supreme *Brahman* is perceived in the effects like the *nyagrodha* tree, yet he is not perceptible.

In the thirteenth section of this *Upaniṣad* shows another example of salt in water. As the salt being dissolved in water is not visible in the form of crystal because it now pervades the whole water and looks like water but every drop of water when tasted manifests its existence. Lord

*Viṣṇu* permeates the very essence of the *jīva*, and though remains separate from it, is not visible. The power of the Lord is perceived in the effects yet he is not perceptible. Therefore, *jīva* is different from God.

The *Upaniṣad* in the fourteenth section introduces the analogy of the traveler and the blind one. A man being tied up by robbers and left alone in the forest with his eyes covered up was leaving for *Gāndhara* so that he may not reach his destination safely. In the same way, the self-overclouded by ignorance, is thrown into the dark forest of *saṃsāra*. By the advice of *guru*, he follows the means of *śravaṇa*, *manana* etc., and then he realizes God.

In the eighteenth section, sage Uddāllaka puts foreword the eight analogy of a sick man on the deathbed. A sick man is able to recognize his relatives so long as his voice is not merged in the mind, mind in the life breath, the life breath in the bodily heat and bodily heat in the Highest Deity. However, the dying man who is embodied self ceases to speak, breath etc., when his speech merges into the mind, the mind in *prāṇa* and *prāṇa* in *tejas* in the highest *Brahman*. Through this illustration, the dependence of the self upon *Brahman* may be apprehended within the embodied self. In the time of his death bed man has come to realize his utter helplessness and dependence on *Brahman*. In the whole lifetime, he feels that he is the master of all and tries to ignore God but at the deathbed, he feels his limitations. This illustration proves the total dependence of the human self on the unseen power of *Brahman*.

In the sixteenth section of the sixth chapter illustrates another example of a person accused of theft. A person accused of the theft and robbery is forced to a trial by fire ordeal. He is forced to hold a heated iron-rod. If the person has committed the robbery then by grasping the heated iron-rod he is burnt and killed. However, being innocent he can cover himself with truth that creates

curtain between heat and him. Hence though he holds the heated iron-rod he is not burnt. Then he is released. Dr. B.N.K Sharma observed –“from the theistic point of view, it will be seen that such an illustration would come as an appropriate warning to the conceited Śvetaketu and to all the *jīvas* (through him) at the concluding section of the *upadeśa* against laying claim to any identity of essence or status with the Supreme Being.”<sup>23</sup>

Madhvācārya in his *Viṣṇutattvavivirṇaya*, clearly stated that - there has no identity between the bird and the rope, among the juices of many trees, between the river and the sea, the *jīva* and the tree, the finest subtle essence and the seed, the salt and the water, the Gāndhara country and the man, the ignorant and the controller of the life-breath etc, and the thief and the stolen property. In all the nine sections, illustrations are given in support of difference thus repeatedly by this illustrations, it is taught that not knowing the true distinction between the self and God there results great calamity. The distinction is so subtle, so difficult of perception that ordinary people are liable to overlook it.

All these nine illustrations indicate that one must know identity between objects, on a cursory view of them. There is not a single instance that showing identity. Therefore, Uddālaka teach his son Śvetaketu is that the human self is separated from God and infinitely inferior to him and therefore the highest duty of man is to worship God. Dr. B. N.K Sharma stated that-“...it was giving expression to one of the fundamental teachings of Theism that the whole cosmos, of which we as individual souls form part, is metaphysically dependent, as a reality, on One Supreme Power called God or *Brahman* or *Tat* (That); and that it is that Supreme Power which sustains everything in the cosmos including the souls; that the cosmos lives, moves because of that Being and derives all its powers and potencies from that great Source, and that therefore the

philosophical message of the text *Tat tvam asi* is the dependence of the cosmos on *Brahman* as a reality and not its identity with *Brahman*. This was nothing short of a Copernican revolution in philosophical thinking with reference to the interpretation of this and other ‘*Mahāvākyas*’ by the discovery of the fresh fact and their appraisal.”<sup>24</sup>

#### Section –IV

##### Vallabhācārya’s view on *Tattvamasi*:

Vallabhācārya’s *Suddhādvaita* is one of the *Vedāntic* schools affiliated to the *Vaiṣṇava* cult. Our old tradition told us that Vallabha’s philosophical thought was very much influenced by Viṣṇuswāmi who belonged to the thirteenth century. Vallabha wrote an incomplete commentary on *Brahmasūtra* named *Aṇubhāṣya* (upto 3.2.23) and wrote a commentary on *Bhāgavatpurāṇa*, *Subodhinī*. Through his famous works like *Aṇubhāṣya*, *Siddhāntarahasya*, *Bhagavatātīkā Subodhinī* he offered theistic interpretation of *Vedānta*, which differs from Śaṅkara’s *Advaita* and other *Vedānta* too.

The doctrine of Vallabha is known as *Śuddhādvaita* or pure non-dualism. The concept of ‘*śuddha*’ differentiates Vallabha’s *Advaita* from Śaṅkara’s *Advaita* unlike Śaṅkara; Vallabha’s doctrine does not soiled by *māyā*. The *Śuddhādvaita* system amalgamates the *Upaniṣadic* doctrine of pure-monism with the doctrine of devotion and selfsurrender to the lord *Kriṣṇa* as found in *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā*. The main teachings of *Śuddhādvaita* are thus:

There are three pillars of *Vedānta*, generally known as ‘*prasthāna traya*’. They are *Vedas* including the *Upaniṣads*, *Gītā*, and the *Brahmasūtras*. Vallabha added the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* as the fourth authority and stated that if doubt arises in any of these authorities, then the light of

succeeding authority would remove this doubt. According to Vallabha, the highest entity is *Brahman*, which is *sat-cit-ānanda*. Vallabha accepted that *Brahman*, *Paramātmān* and *Bhāgavata* are synonymous and referred to lord *Kṛṣṇa*, the highest entity. He is *pūrṇa*, *puruṣottama*. He possesses several qualities of which *jñāna* and *kriyā* are the most prominent. The *kriyāśakti* or power of action of *Brahman* is described in the *purvakāṇḍa* and *jñānaśakti* or power of knowledge is described in the *uttarakāṇḍa* of *Vedas*. According to Vallabha, there is *Akṣara Brahman* lower than *Para Brahman* who possesses *sat*, *cit* and limited *ānanda*. When *Brahman* described to be many for the sake of pleasure or *līlārtham*, thousand of selves come out of him like sparks from fire.<sup>25</sup> The self is *aṁśa* or part of and no doubt is eternal. Again, the universe has been created out of his self for the sake of sport without suffering, changes what so ever, and is related to it as the spider is to its web. He propagated that the *puṣṭimārga* or the way of divine grace is the perfect and unfailing means of enjoying highest bliss. According to this system, *Brahman* is *saccidānanda* and *jīva* is *Brahman* itself with *sat* and *cit* but the aspect of *ānanda* of *Brahman* is obscured in *jīva*. However, it should be kept in our mind that *ānanda* is not totally absent but it remains latent in the *jīva*. As per example, as the masculine qualities found in youth are not totally absent in a child but latent in him (*Aṇubhāṣya* 2.3.31).<sup>26</sup>

The followers of this system asserted that the purport of the eight section of the sixth chapter of *Cāndogya Upaniṣad* is to impart instruction about *Brahman*, which is ground or *āśraya* and the *aṁśī* of the whole universe including the individual self. The doctrine of pure identity between *jīva* and *Brahman* is not the real intension of *Tattvamasi*. Creatorship, omniscience, the real seerhood, all pervasiveness are uncommon and special attribute of *Brahman* can never be attributed to *jīva* whose difference from *Brahman* has been well established by the author of *Brahmasūtra*



at several places on the basis *aṁśāṁśibhāva*. Being overwhelmed with the emotion of love and devotion towards *Brahman* attains *sarvātmabhāva* by his divine grace. Therefore his own concealed bliss is manifested and leads to a state of *Brahmabhāva*-state similar to that of *Brahman*. It is such type of acquisition of this *Brahmabhāva*, which impelled the seers to make such declaration as *Tattvamasi*. *Jīva* is *Brahman* itself with *sat* and *cit* but the *ānanda* aspect of *Brahman* is obscured in *jīva*. The *jīva* is *Brahman* itself under a limit. However, the *jīvas* are similar to God but some difference has to be accepted in some respects. Vallabha says that even the bliss aspect of God, which is obscured in the *jīva*, is not totally absent but it remains latent in the *jīva*. It is the same just as the masculine qualities found in youth are not totally absent in a child but are latent in him.<sup>27</sup>

#### Our Observation:

Only the *Advaitins* uphold the view that the individual self is really nothingbut *Brahman*. In the statement '*Tattvamasi*', '*Tat*' literally means the *Brahman* with omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence. '*Tvam*' literally means the *jīva* with limited knowledge and powers and the term '*asi*' signifies the identification between the two. However, apparently the identification is impossible. *Advaitins* introduce *lakṣaṇā* or secondary meaning to establish their view. They argued what is incompatible in the connotations of the two terms is to be rejected and what is compatible is to be retained. However, the *Vaiṣṇava Vedāntins* though different in their views unanimously criticize the *Advaitin's* view. None of them ever claims absolute identity between them.

There are some common factors among *Vaiṣṇavavedāntins*. According to the *Vaiṣṇavavedāntins*, there is no difference between *Brahman* and God. They identify *Īśvara* or *Brahman* with *Kṛṣṇa*,

*Nārāyaṇa*, *Viṣṇu*, or *Śrīhari*. They never distinguish between *Brahman* and God. All most every one stated that God is the embodiment of all auspicious qualities and when it is said about *nirguṇa* it only try to establish that he is devoid of any evil qualities. To them God is merciful and gracious. With the help of his divine grace, one can be able to get rid of bondage of this mundane world. In their theo-metaphysics, they try to establish that *jīva-Brahman* identification with the help of *lakṣṇā* is just a metaphysical fiction. They define *Tattvamasi* in different manner.

According to Rāmānuja '*Tattvamasi*' does not mean that *jīva* is essentially and absolutely the same as *Brahman* but the apposition is to be understood as 'blue lotus', where the quality and the qualified stand in apposition with each other. *Jīva* is nothing but the mode of *Brahman*. It is very similar to it in nature. Nimbārka too does not accept absolute identity of non-distinction. The word '*Tat*' signifies the *Brahman*, which is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and self of all. '*Tvam*' signifies the individual self, which depends for its existence upon the *Brahman*. The word '*asi*' signifies the relation of the two, which is difference not inconscient with non-difference like fire and its sparks. According to Vallabha, the existence and knowledge are manifested in the individual selves but the bliss remains obscured. Prof. J.N. Mohanty observed- "...both Śaṅkara and Vallabha argue that differences are mere appearances. Rāmānuja argues for identity in and through difference or identity qualified by difference. Difference does not and cannot exist independently of identity to which it belongs. Accordingly, identity is primary. Nimbarka argues for identity and difference; both are equally real."<sup>28</sup> God-realization is regarded as the goal of human life in *Vaiṣṇava Vedānta*. Mere self-realization is not enough because a distinction between God and individual is basic in theo-religious philosophy. *Bhakti* is the ultimate means of self-realization. To them the aim of life lies not merely in the knowledge of the nature of the self-but in commune with God, which gives the experience of divine bliss. A

devotee does not want liberation or to merge his individuality into God. The loving devotion of God has supreme value for a devotee. Any system, which accepts that divine grace, is the ultimate means of liberation has to compel to establish difference between God and individual. Devotion is possible only when the individual self has a feeling of reverence and dependence towards God and regards him as the ultimate aim of life. There are various approaches to realize the significance of *Tattvamasi*. These approaches are depicted in Hanuman's realization. He opined that- 'as long as I have the physical consciousness , thou art the master, I am thy servant , when I consider myself as an individual being, thou art whole, I am thy part; but when I realize the atman then I am one with thee.'<sup>29</sup>

## References:

1. *Īśvarascit acit ceti padārtha tritayam hariḥ/Īśvarasciditi prokto jivodrśyamcit punariti//* (Sarvadarśansamgraha, Rāmānujadarśanam-8)  
Sayana-Madhavācārya, *Sarvadarśansamgraha*, trans. Satyajyoti Chakraborty (Kolkata: Sahityashree, 1416 Bangabda), p.29.
2. *Nirguṇapratipādaka nirastanikhila doṣa'navadhikatiśaya asamkhyeya kalyāṅguṇa gaṇaḥpuruṣotttamo abhidhīyate/* (Śrībhāṣya1.1.1)  
Śrībhagavad-Rāmānujamuni, *Śrībhāṣyam* with the comm. *Śrutaprakāśikā* of Mahamahapadhyaya Sudarsana Vyasabhatta, ed. T.Srinivasasarma (Varanasi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, 1991), p.9.
3. *Sālokyā-living on the same locus with the God*
4. *Sāmīpya- being a personal associate living near God*
5. *Sājujya-getting identified or united with God*
6. *Tattvamasi ityādivākyeṣu sāmānādhikaraṇyam na nirviśeṣabastu aikeyaparam; 'tat-tvam'padayoh saviśesabrahmavidhāyitvat/tat' padam hi sarvājña satyasankalpam jagatkāraṇambrahma parāmṛṣati, "tadeaiksata bahusyām" (Ch.Up.6.2.3) ityādisan tasyeb prakṛtatvāt/ 'tat'-sāmānādhikaraṇyam tvam padam ca acit viśiṣṭa-jīvaśarīrakam brahmapratipādayati/prakāradvaya avastitaika bastuparatvāt sāmānādhikaraṇyasya prakāradvayaparityāge pravṛttinimittaḥ bhedāsambhabena sāmānādhikaraṇayamyeba parityaktvam syāt..//*  
Sribhagavad-Rāmānujamuni, *Śrībhāṣyam*, ed. T.Srinivasasarma, op.cit.,p.198-199.
7. *So'yam devadattaḥ ityatrapi na lakṣaṇā, bhūtavartamānakālasambandhitaikyapratityabirodhāt/deśabhedābirodhāt ca kālabhedena parihṛtaḥ/ibid.,p.199.*
8. *Tadaikṣata bahu syam"iti upakramavirodhaśca/ekavijñānena sarvavijñānam-pratijñā ca na ghatate/ibid.,p.199.*
9. *Jivaśarīraka-jagatkāraṇa-brahmaparatve mukhyabṛīttam padadvayam/prakāradvāya-viśiṣṭaikavastupratipādanena sāmānādhikaraṇyam ca sidham/nirastinikhiladoṣasya samastakalyāṅguṇātmakasya brāhmaṇo jīvāntaryāmitvam api aiśvaryamparam*

*pratipāditam bhavati/upakramanukulata ca/ekavijnanena sarvavijnanapratijna upapattica,suṣṣhmacid acidvastuśarirasya eva brāhmaṇaḥ sthūlacid acidvastuśarīrtvena kāryatvāt/ “tamīśvaraṇam paramam maheśvaram...parasya śaktirbibidhaiba śrūyate”(Śvet.Up 6.7.8), apahatapāpma...śatyakamah satyasaṁkalpah(ch.up 8.1.5)ityādi srūtyantaravirodhśca//ibid.,p.201.*

10. *Anantacintya svābhābikasvarūpa guṇaśaktyadvibhārttamo yo ramākāntaḥ puruṣottamo brahmaśabdabhidheyastāduisayika jījñāsā satatam sampādaniyethyūpakrama vākyārthaḥ// Vedāntapārijāta sourava on Brahmasūtra 1.1.1.*  
Nimbarkacarya, *Brahmamīmāṁsābhāṣya*, ed. Pandit Vindhyeshvariparsada Dvivedin (Benaras: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Book Depot,1910), p.151.
11. *Asya acintyabicitrasamstansampansyasamkhyeyanamrūpādibviśesasrayasya acintyarūpasya viśvasya sṛṣṭistitilaya yasmāt sarvjñadyanantyaguṇ āsryadbrahmesakaladiniyanturbhagabato bhavanti, tadeva brahmeti//1.1.2, ibid.,p. 151-152.*
12. *Svabhābataḥ apastasamastadoṣam aśesakalyāṅguṇaikaarāśīm/byuhanginam Brahman parambareṇyam dhāyemkṛṣṇam kamaleksanam harim// Daśoślokī-4*  
Nimbārkācārya, *Vedāntakāṁdhenuḥ*, trans. Swami Dananjayadasji Kathiyababa ( 24 Pgs[near Kolkata]:Kathiyababar Ashrama), p.54.
13. *Lokabat tu lilākaibalyam/ Brahmasūtra 2.1.33.*  
Śāṅkarācārya, the Brahmasūtra Sāṅkarabhāṣya with the commentaries Bhāmati, Kalpataru and Parimala ed. K.L.Joshi (Delhi: Parimal Publications, 2007), P.480.
14. *Ubhayabyapadeśāt ahikuṇḍalavat/ Brahmasūtra3.2.27 mūrttamūrttasya pratiṣedhyatvam prarayati,mūrttamūrttadikam viśvam brahmaṇi svakāraṇe vinnāvinnasambadhena statumarhatibhedābbhedabyapadeśāt ahikndalavat//jīvapuruṣottamayorapi tathā sambandhajñeyah/ubhayabyapadeśāt prabhā-tadvatyoriba/atohanantenetya anena kebalābbhede nasamkya iti bhavaḥ//*  
Nimbārkācārya, *Brahmamīmāṁsābhāṣya*, ed. Pandit Vindhyeshvariparsada Dvivedin, op.cit., p.352.
15. *Vedāntaratnamanjuṣā*  
Bhagavat Purushottamacharya, *Vedāntaratnamanjuṣā*, ed. Ratnagopal Bhattacarya(Benaras: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Book Depot,1908),p.91.

16. *Jiveśvara vidā caiva jareśvara vidā tathā/jīvābhedo mithacaiva jarājīva vidā tathā/mithaśca jarabhedo ayam prapñico bhedapañcakah/...// Pūrṇaprajñadarśanam-23-24; Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya-340*  
Madhvacarya, *Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya*, trans. S.S. Raghavachar (Mangalore: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, 1971), p.73.
17. *Mokṣaḥ ca viṣṇuprāsadena vinā na lavyate/Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya-105, ibid., p.25.*
18. *Jīvasya paramaikyam tu buddhisārūpyameva tu/ekasthān nibeśo vā vyaktisthaṁpekṣyasah/nasvarūpaikatā tasya muktasyapi nirūpataḥ/svatantraya pūrṇateholpatva paratantryeyanirūpate iti//Pūrṇaprajñadarśanam-35-36*  
Sayana-Madhvacarya, *Sarvadarśanaśāstra*, trans. Satyajyoti Chakraborty, (Kolkata: Sahityashree, 1416 Bangabada), p.43.
19. *Brahmvida brahmaiva bhavati ityādi ca sampūjya brāhmaṇa bhaktya/śūdrohpi brāhmohoro bhabeditivat bṛhito bhabatityārthah//Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya-302* Madhvacarya, Madhvacarya, *Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya*, trans. S.S. Raghavachar, op.cit., p.66.  
*Na hi brāhmaṇapūjakaḥ sa eva brāhmohoro bhavati/Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya-303*  
Madhvacarya, *Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya*, trans. S.S. Raghavachar, ibid., p.67.
20. *Atattvamiti vā chhedastenaikam sunirākṣtam/Pūrṇaprajñadarśanam-37*  
Sayana-Madhvacarya, *Sarvadarśanaśāstra*, trans. Satyajyoti Chakraborty, op.cit., p.43.
21. *Na cayam abhedoupadeśah/sa yathā sakuniḥ sūtreṇa prābadho diśam diśam patitvaānyatrayatanamlabdha bandhanamebopaśrayate sanmūlah soumyemah sarva prajāḥ sadāyatanaḥ satpratiṣṭhaḥ//Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya-170,171*  
Madhvacarya, *Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya*, trans. S.S. Raghavachar, op.cit., p.36.
22. *Ato nadyah samūdradagachhanti tam prabiśanti ca samūdraṣṭu sa eva naitasamsamūdratvam bhabatitarthah//Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya-185, ibid., p.41.*
23. Dr.B.N.K. Sharma, *Lectures on Vedanta*, (Dharwar: Karnatak University, 1973), p.43.
24. ibid., p.25.
25. *Jivo nāma brahmaṇaḥ aṁśa kutaḥ? Taraisa yuktih, visphūliṅga ibagrehi jarajībāvinirgataḥ.../Aṇubhāṣya on Brahmasūtra 2.3.43.*

Vallabhacarya, Srimad Brahmasūtrāṇubhāṣya, ed. Prof. Maganlal Ganapatiram Shastri (Delhi: Butala &Co, 1980 re.), p.205.

26. *Pumstvadvivattvasya* *satobhivyaktiyogat/vyapadeśadasayamapi*  
*ānandaśāsyānatyantamsattvam pumstvadvivat, yathā pumstvam sevadisamarthyam valye*  
*bidyāmanevayoubane prakāśate, tathā ānandaśāsyapi sata eva*  
*abhivyaktiyogaḥ*”/Aṇubhāṣya 2.3.31, ibid., p.200.

27. Ibid., p.200.

28. J.N. Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.90.

29. Swami Prabhananda, “Thou art That”, *Prabudha Bharat* vol.LXX (March, 1965): 87-92.

## Fifth Chapter

### The interpretation of *Tattvamasi* and its significance in Modern Indian

#### Thought

##### Section-I

##### Is *Tattvamasi* mere a conceptual thought?

According to the *Advaitins*, all *mahāvākyas* proclaim the great metaphysical truth of the identity of the individual self with *Brahman*. Śaṅkara himself and other later preceptors like Sarvajñātmanmuni; Vidyāraṇyamuni etc. interpret *Tattvamasi* as implying the metaphysical identity of the individual self with *Brahman*. Here some questions may be raised:<sup>1</sup>

- Can *Tattvamasi* be interpreted also as an ethical concept?
- Can *Tattvamasi* be accepted as a moral maxim?
- Is *Tattvamasi* just a conceptual taught or can we accept this as a guiding principle?

Two contrary views have been found regarding the ethical principle of *Tattvamasi*. Some critics considered *Tattvamasi* antagonistic to religion and ethics. According to them, there cannot be any space for active ethics, because ethics presupposes plurality or ultimate difference of an individual from another. If everything is *Brahman*, why should one take an effort for the advancement of self or for the good of others? Western scholars A.C. Bouquet, Albert Schweitzer etc. seriously attack on the metaphysical interpretation of *Tattvamasi* and such type of thesis. They claimed that of their day-to-day practical life and social service will be meaningless.



On the contrary of the above mentioned view our new- *Vedāntins* interpret *Tattvamasi* as an ethical concept. The focal point of their argument is thus:

If we are identical with other and with *Brahman*, then we cannot hurt others because whom we want to hurt? *Mahāvākya* is therefore the foundation of morality. If we are identical with other and with *Brahman* then we try to good for others. If *jīva* is none other than *Brahman* then we cannot hurt others because whom we are going to hurt. Everything is *Brahman* everyone is *Brahman*. Therefore, *Tattvamasi* as well as other *mahāvākyas* are the foundation of morality. We try to establish this from some occidental and oriental scholars' writings.

## Section-II

### Vivekānanda's interpretation

Vivekānanda (1863-1902) spoke of the need for a practical way to achieve moral results. Vivekānanda never considered an individual is mere an ordinary human being but potentially as powerful as the divine is. This view he borrowed from the dictum '*jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ*'. To Swāmiji the essence of all ethics is the perception and the feeling of being one with universe. Each being is respectable, powerful and eternal like divine. According to the *Advaita Vedānta*, each object is this universe including the human being is a manifestation of *Brahman*. If one individual able to realize *Brahman*, then he becomes *Brahman*. *Śruti* also confirms that - '*Brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati*' (*Br.up.3.29*) . However, before the realization he troubles under the misconception that he is just a limited being. Pointing out the very truth to the bound soul, the *Upaniṣad* says- 'That thou art'. Swāmi Vivekānanda on his various lectures and letters gave emphasis on this epoch-making *mahāvākya* that identifies individual self with *Brahman* and had

given a broader and deeper ethical interpretation of it. Swami Vivekānanda confirmed us that if someone starts to think that he is potentially identical with Supreme Reality i.e. Supreme *Brahman*, then he must have feel strength and energy in him. Thinking of oneself as powerful, fearless, as being identical with supreme divinity is true religion, not just trembling before God who sits beyond this world for judging our actions. He gave a new interpretation of *mahāvākya* in this way-

“...even the gate of death, in the greatest danger, in the thick of battle field, at the bottom of the ocean, on the tops of the highest mountain, in the thickest of the forest, tell yourself I am he. Day and night, say I am he. It is the greatest strength, it is religion.”<sup>2</sup>

If each and everyone in the world are identical with me, therefore, in injuring another, I am injuring myself, and in loving another, I love myself. This knowledge follows from the *mahāvākya* ‘*Tat tvam asi*’. Not only that if some one considers all as his own self treats no one else, as a stranger, and then there will total harmony. This *Vedāntic* principle provides us the basis of ethics. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* teaches us that ‘you are that’-that each of us individual is ultimately identical with Supreme Being of the universe. This idea of personal identity with *Brahman* is standard in the *Advaita Vedānta* tradition. Vivekānanda added an innovative idea i.e. an ethics of altruism. If each of us is identical with *Brahman* we are therefore also each identical with everyone else. This expression of oneness is what we call love and sympathy and it is the basis of all our ethics and morality. This expression of oneness is summed up in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* by the celebrated aphorism ‘*Tattvamasi*’.

To everyone this is thought thou art one with the Universal Being, and as such every self that exists, is your self, and everybody that exists, is your body in hurting anyone you hurt yourself,

involving one you love yourself. From this point of view, all are related in the true sense of the term and therefore there does not arise any question of conflict among social beings and it leads to a good moral life. In Vivekānanda's voice-

“Though all religions have taught ethical precepts, such as ‘do not kill, do not injure, love your neighbour as yourself etc. yet now of these has given the reason. Why should I not injure my neighbour? To this question there was no satisfactory or conclusive answer forthcoming until it was evolved by the metaphysical speculations of the *hindus* who could not rest satisfied with mere dogmas. So the *Hindus* say, that this *ātman* is absolutely and all pervading, therefore infinite. In addition, each individual soul is a part and parcel of that Universal Soul, which is infinite. Therefore, in injuring his neighbor the individual actually injures himself. This is the basic metaphysical all ethical codes.”<sup>3</sup>

The *Vedāntic* principle provides us the basis of ethics. It gives us the message of enjoyment through renunciation. If one feels the existence of self to all social beings then one must not enjoy one's life after confining oneself within rather he will try to share the enjoyment with others. All are related in the true sense of the term and hence there does not arise any question of conflict among social beings. It leads to a moral good life.

Swāmiji's frameworks of social service come to life through *sevā*. However, the concept and practice of *sevā* already existed in Indian religion especially in *Vedāntic* cult. Traditional *sevā* was worship of God. It becomes worship of God in human beings and *sevā* moved as *sādhana* that can lead us to *mokṣa*. Swāmiji says-

“This is gist of all worship to be pure and to good to others. He who sees *Siva* in the poor, in the weak...”<sup>4</sup>

Thus, Swāmiji reinterpreted the metaphysical idea of oneness and stressed upon the practical implication. Swāmiji uttered - ‘Arise awake and stop not till the goal reached.’ Here mere arising is not sufficient for the people but awakening is also essential for them. Everyone should awake from the sleep of wrong conception about oneself. One should awake after realizing the divinity existing in one self. One should realize the truth of the mantra ‘*Tattvamasi*’. Swāmi Vivekānanda had tried to harmonize between material and spiritual needs. Always through his lectures and writings, he had given emphasis on both the sides. To him the doctrine of the *Advaita Vedānta* not only quenches one’s spiritual thirst but the need of our day to day mundane life too, which is also essential. Vivekānanda gives a new interpretation of *Tattvamasi* considering its practical aspect. He himself said that he had brought down the doctrine of *Advaita Vedānta* from the forest to serve individuals day-to-day needs.

### Section –III

#### Schopenhauer’s interpretation

“Philosophy and Confrontation” is a collection of essays written by Paul Hacker (1913-1979 C.E.), the famous indologist of twentieth century. The essays of this book are primarily concerned with traditional modern *Vedānta*. This book was forwarded and was edited by Wilhelm Halbfass. ‘Schopenhauer and Hindu Ethics’, one of the essays of this book, was based on *neo-hinduism*, introduced the problem of interpretation of *Vedānta* in colonial India. He pointed out the Christian and nationalist inspiration of *neo-hinduism* by documenting extensive conceptual

borrowings. In this section, we limit our discussion only on *Tattvamasi* issue related Hacker's view.

In 1962, Hacker wrote an article namely, 'Schopenhauer Und Die Ethic Des Hinduismus'. Now the article is translated as 'Schopenhauer and Hindu Ethics' and published in a collection of Hacker's writings by Hacker's student Wilhelm Halbfass. Hacker boldly claimed that the application of use of '*Tattvamasi*' in ethics has been started recent within himself. To him traditional *Hinduism* did not relate '*Tattvamasi*' to ethics. He claimed that infact *neo-hinduism* was influenced by Western interpretations of itself in coming to this viewpoint. Hacker specially indicated to the German Philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer ( 1788-1860 C.E.) and to the Schopenhauer's student Paul Deussen( 1845-1919 C.E.) for this usage. To him this ethics is not even Indian at all, but a hermeneutic invention of German Philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer. In his work 1841, "*On the Basis of Morality*" Schopenhauer identified compassion as the fundamental basis for morality. Schopenhauer claimed-

"The readers of my ethics known that with me the ultimate foundation of morality is the truth which in the Vedas and Vedanta receives its expression in the established mystical formula, 'tat tvam asi', which is spoken with reference to every living thing, be it man or beast, and is called the mahavakya, the great word."<sup>5</sup>

Deussen took the principle further and actually advocated it as the basis how we should act. Deussen gave a lecture in Bombay on February 25<sup>th</sup> 1893 concerning the *Tat tvam asi* theory of the foundation of ethics. The lecture was published in his famous book, "*On the Philosophy of Vedanta*". He said-

“The gospels postulates quite correctly as the highest law of morality: love your neighbour as yourself. But why should I do so, since by the order of nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself, not in my neighbor? The answer is not in Bible (this venerable book being not yet quite free from semantic realism), but it is in the veda, in the great formula ‘tat tvam asi’-thou art that’, which gives in three words all of metaphysics and morals. you shall love your neighbor as yourself because you are your neighbor, and mere illusion makes you believe that your neighbor is something different from yourself.”<sup>6</sup>

Vivekānanda sailed from Bombay to America on 31st May 1893 to take part in the Parliament of Religion at the World fair in Chicago in September 1893. He arrived at the end of July and during the next two years, he lectured at different places in the United States including Parliament of Religion. He travelled via Paris to England in August 1895 and stayed there until April 1896. During the next eight months, he stayed in England and in Switzerland. Vivekānanda went to Germany and he was pleased being guest of renowned scholar Paul Deussen. The European tour he was accomplished by his disciple Mr. and Mrs. Sevier. Hacker boldly claimed that it is not until after his meeting that Vivekānanda’s writings included the principle as basis for ethics. Prior to this time, Vivekānanda’s ethics was based on the idea of disinterested action. Even Vivekānanda said that it was foolish talk to speak of doing well to the world. According to Hacker, after the meeting with Paul Deussen, Vivekānanda delivered a lecture on Wimbledon, namely ‘The Philosophy of Vedas’ (Vedānta as factor in civilization), this lecture was quite similar with Deussen’s Bombay lecture. The similar portion of this lecture was-

“While the *Vedānta* philosophers solved that question, they at the same time discovered the basis of ethics. Though all religions have thought ethical precepts, such as, do not kill, do not

injure;love your neighbour as yourself, etc; yet none of these has given the reason. To this question there was no satisfactory or conclusive answer forthcoming until it was evolved by the metaphysical speculations of the *Hindus* who could not rest satisfied with mere dogmas. So the *Hindus* say, that this atman is absolutely and all pervading, therefore infinite. There cannot be two infinities,for they would limit each other and would become finite. In addition, each injuring his neighbor the individual actually injures himself. This is the basic metaphysical all ethical codes.”<sup>7</sup>

Next, Hacker argued that-

The main ideas in his passage come unmistakably from Deussen’s Bombay lecture. From the spring onwards, when he spoke about ethics in India,Europe or America, Vivekānanda habitually presented the Schopenhauer-Deussen pseudo *Vedānta* theory without abandoned his earlier ethical ideas.

#### Section –IV

##### The controversy

According to Hacker the ‘Tattvamasi ethics’ did not found in any dated works of Vivekānanda before he met Paul Deussen in 1896. However, we may boldly argue that many of Vivekānanda’s writings and lectures are still undated. Even we find some dated passages where ‘Tattvamasi ethics’ enshrined in his writings. Dermot Killingways in his article ‘Vivekananda’s Western Message’ highlights on this issue. We try to show some instances, which disprove Hacker’s proposal.

Vivekananda wrote a letter on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1893 to his disciple Alasinga Perumal where he stated about *Tattvamasi* in indirect way. To counter a view that oppression in India is the fault of Hindu religion Vivekananda says- “on the other hand, your religion teaches you that every being is only your self-multiplied.” It is true that he did not expound the point but the implied meaning is that this doctrine teaches that not to oppress others because every being is only our own self.

In his lecture ‘*The Spirit and Influence of Vedanta*’ which was delivered on 28<sup>th</sup> March 1896 at Twentieth Century Club, Boston he stated-

“This expression of oneness is what we call love and sympathy, and it is the basis of all our ethics and morality. This is summed up in the Vedanta philosophy by the celebrated aphorism, *tat tvam asi*, thou art that. To every man, this is taught: thou art one with this universal being, and, as such, every soul that exists is your body; and in hurting anyone, you hurt yourself, in loving anyone, you love yourself.”<sup>8</sup>

Since it was delivered in Boston, America on March 1896 according to the available biographical information, it would have been given certainly before he left for London in April 1896 where he would meet Paul Deussen.

In his famous lecture, ‘Atman’ after saying that *Advaita Vedanta* gives freedom from fear he stated-

“Yet we know that therein lies the explanation of all ethics, of all morality and all spirituality in the universe. Why is it every one says, ‘do good to others? Where is its explanation? Why is it that all great men have preached that brotherhood of mankind, and greater men the brotherhood of



all lives? Because whether they were conscious of it or not, behind all that, though all their irrational and personal superstitions, was peering forth the eternal light of the self denying all manifoldness, and asserting that the whole universe but one.”<sup>9</sup>

Dermot Killinngley in his article “*Vivekananda’s Westernmessage*” uttered that-

If Hacker’s view that Vivekananda’s ethical use of *Tattvaamasi* was taken from Deussen’s Bombay lecture is to be upheld, we must either date this passage after the meeting with Dessean’s or modify Hacker’s chronology by supposing that the substance of the passage in Deussean’s lecture was known to Vivekananda, either in print or through a third party before the meeting.

When *Tattvamasi* was criticized as armchair philosophy and socially irrelevant, Swāmiji showed that this ancient dictum is consistent with the highest human ethics. However, the message of *Tattvamasi* was basically spiritual and philosophical but had deep practical and social implications. The essence of ethics is the perception and the feeling of being one with the whole universe. Tressing on the *Advaitic* doctrine of the oneness of being Swamiji provided a rational basis for active life and preached a religion of equality and universal goodwill. In this way, he established that the metaphysical import of *Tattvamasi* could be converted into practical religion and ethics. We may conclude that Swāmiji’s concept of *sevā* logically had deducted from the concept of *Tattvamasi*. All selves living on this earth have essential identity and affinity among themselves because each self is the manifestation of the same reality-the absolute *Brahman*. This conviction forms the genesis of Swāmiji’s spiritual humanism. We learn the new *mahavakya* i.e. ‘*sivajnane jivaseva*’. Based on the teaching of the *Advaitic* ideal of oneness of existence he also tried to solve social problems of India. Apparently, *sevā* is helping others with a sense of

difference. However, in essence *sevā* is to service without the sense of any kind of difference or separate identity. That is possible only when one realizes consciousness everywhere. Thus, our modern *Vedāntins* have given wonderful philosophical explanation and noble practical orientation of *Tattvamasi*.

#### Our observation

*Tattvamasi* is an *Upaniṣadic* statement. Classical commentators or interpreters always emphasized its metaphysical significance. The extreme monists emphasize the identity of individual self and Universal Self. The dualists interpret it in a different manner. However, all of them enhanced its metaphysical approach only. In nineteenth century, the dimension of interpretation has to been going to change. Thinkers start to explain its moral values. Therefore, its greatness has acquired a new dimension in this century. Then our modern Cārvāka Dayananda (1924-2007 C.E.) has raised a different issue. He and other thinkers try to mould its interpretation. Thus, the advice of Uddālaka is very much contemporary and its greatness has acquired new life in different ages. Now a days thinkers busy with the question that whether the identity statements like '*Tattvamasi*' is just like 'the morning star is the evening star' or not? As far as Fregean view is concerned the referents of 'morning star' and 'evening star' are the one and the same object though the senses are difference in character. The senses of 'the morning star is evening star' are 'star seeing in the morning' and the 'star seeing in the evening'. Though the senses of the two terms are different from each other, yet the referent objects are one and the same. In case of '*Tattvamasi*' the sense are different no doubt, because '*Tat*', which is a pronoun, represents some entity and '*tvam*' also represents some entity different from '*Tat*', which is evidenced from the very construction of the term. '*Tat*' represents something having neuter gender

(better to say beyond gender) why ‘*tvam*’ may represent someone having non-nutergender (that is either masculine or feminine). However, so far referent is concerned both the terms have two referents having identity in difference that is between two referred objects. ‘*Tat*’ stands for omniscient and all-pervasivity but ‘*tvam*’ stands for less knower and having atomic magnitude. If we see the reference only then it is obvious that there is a lot of difference or non-identity between the two. However, this is one side of the story. As far as consciousness is concerned then both the terms have referred to two conscious entities. In this part, there lies an utter identity. This type of identity is quite identity in difference unlike the morning star and evening star. For this reason by uttering ‘*Tattvamasi*’, one should understand that he is identified with *Brahman* but in mundane world, he never realizes the truth. A human being standing ‘*tvam*’ is always identical with the primordial consciousness because he is also a conscious being. However, at this stage his having nescience he is not feeling that he is omniscient and pervading being. That is why it is general tendency of human being to achieve the absolute identity with *Brahman*. One of the means of achieving this goal is to ‘hearing’ the *mahāvākya* like ‘*Tattvamasi*’. Through ‘hearing this *mahāvākya* an individual’s nescience may be removed and achieve identity with the absolute *Brahman* which is the stage of *Pāramārthikasattā*. When the *Advaitin* argues that ‘*Tattvamasi*’ asserts the identity between individual self and *Brahman*, they are not talking of identity in the sense of tautology either in the sense of mere repetition of the sentence or in virtue of its formal structure because what is asserted is that the underlying self of the individual is *Brahman*. ‘*Tat tvamasi*’ must not be expressed just like ‘*a=a*’ because what is meant by *ātman* for the individual is different from what is meant by *Brahman* for the individual. When the *Advaitins* argued that ‘*jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ*’, they are not establishing that individual self related with ego and therefore, is identical with *Brahman*. We may quote from

Eliot Deutsch's writings- "Identity judgements such as... 'Thou art that' -are not for the Advaitin, mere tautologies...". He tried to argue that not all identity propositions are tautologies, nor are they superfluous. He further said "...the concrete representation of a movement of thought from one ontological level (of particularity) through another (of universality) to yet another (of unity), wherein the attainment of the latter negates the distinctions between the former."<sup>10</sup>

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## Conclusion

From the previous discussion just concluded, it is clear that '*Tattvamasi*' has had a horary past, having within its fold a long tradition of philosophical dialogue. Each school of *Vedānta* interprets the text in different manner according to keep their metaphysics in their mind. The *Advaitins* believe that there is only one reality and that is *Brahman* and the names and forms of the world and worldly things are false. Moreover, they stress on the fundamental identification of individual consciousness with Pure Consciousness. However, the *Dvaitins* never accept this identification. Every school of the *Dvaitavedantins* accepts that 'divine grace' is the ultimate means of liberation. They never accept the essential identify between them. To them devotion is overall. Devotion is possible only when the individual self has a feeling of reverence and dependence towards God. They regard God as the ultimate goal of life. Therefore, they strongly opposed the fundamental identification of individual self and God. As a result, it occurs obviously that the various sections of *Vedānta* are different from each other in respect of their interpretation of *Tattvamasi*. As per example-

- *Tat tvam asi*
- *Atat tvam asi*
- *Tasmat tvam asi*
- *Tasmai tvam asi*
- *Tasmin tvam asi*
- *Tasya tvam asi*

The focus of our thesis is limited only in the *Advaitic* point of view. All of us know the difference between *Brahman* and *jīva* very vividly. The problem is about to establish unity or identity which is hidden for us. However, the *Advaitin* faces the challenge by introducing the

concept of *māyā*. The *Advaitins* argued that *jīva* is identical with *Brahman*. Only we are ignorant of it due to the influence of *māyā*. The aim of this *mahāvākya*, *Tattvamasi* is to remove this ignorance. The intension of the *Upaniṣad* is to liberate *jīva* from bondage by showing that the *jīva* in essence is *Brahman* itself nothing else. The aim of this advice is to release the *jīva* from its *jīvabhāva* and to realize its essence in *Brahman*. *Tattvamasi* helps to rediscover this identity and when so do, the two do not remain. There is only one consciousness, which has appeared to us under two different names, and forms. *Jīva* is *Brahman* itself.

The content of our paper is “Philosophical significance of *Tattvamasi*: A Critical Study”.

Generally a critical study has two aspects of a theory showing the -

Demerits and

Merits

In our critical study about philosophical significance of *Tattvamasi*, we find little to oppose it. The main objection is whether the message would be considered as a mere thought? Without the proper application, a thought just becomes imagination but through our discussion, we have tried to answer this objection in our previous chapter.

Moreover, the contributions of *Tattvamasi* have been enormous in the social and spiritual life of human beings. The whole discussion is one kind of psychotherapy. It repeatedly introduces the truth that there is only one ultimate reality and individual selves are one with that reality. It is spiritual as well as practical guideline for development of an individual. If all *jīvas* are essentially *Brahman* then all should be treated equally. From *Tattvamasi* it follows the spiritual humanism. The message of *Tattvamasi* is great and its greatness lies in harmony. If one realizes that, the

individual self is essentially identical with Universal Self. If one realizes that all individual selves are non-different, as a result there should not be any difference among them. Spiritual bond of mutual love and fellow feeling will arise. This is also a very important aspect of *Tattvamasi*. The truth makes a man see himself in all and all in him and see *Brahman* in himself and himself in *Brahman* can neither oppose nor contradict anything. He has known that by the knowing of which everything is known. His heart overflows with infinite compassion. The doctrine of self's non-duality fulfills these conditions. Divinity of the individual self is the spiritual basis of freedom. A man should be treated by his inherent divinity not by his cast, social position, money, rituals, religious affiliation etc. the oneness of existence is the spiritual basis. By hearting others, a man hearts himself and by loving others, he loves himself. The statement is both humanistic and spiritualistic at the same time. Even social justice can be established peacefully in our society through the message of *Tattvamasi*. Schopenhauer to Swami Vivekānanda all the scholars bring out the practical application of this. If everyone tried to believe that all human beings are equal and they are united by true inner cord of spirituality then they should have sympathy and fellow feeling for others. It is strong objection to *hindu* caste system. We are same equally divine. As being essentially one with *Brahman* therefore, none is untouchable. Moreover, the main tenet embedded in *Tattvamasi* is to identify an individual being as identical with *Brahman*. If *Brahman* remains in all individual beings, this conviction may bring peace in this world after removing the environment of violence.

The *mahāvākya* '*Tattvamasi*' has some therapeutic value apart from its spiritual value. In modern time human beings, especially young generation is suffering frustration etc. due to various reasons. An individual is suffering from various psychological complexities. Most of the cases they suffer from inferiority complex, which makes them psychologically weak and frustrated. If



he is given an idea that he is not an ordinary human being having limited power and capacity, he will get back confidence on himself. The significance of the *mahāvākya* lies on the fact that individual is not an ordinary being, but identified with God as endorsed by our *śāstric* statement ‘*amṛtasyaputrāḥ*’. It entails that human beings are not an ordinary weak person but the sons of the immortal. This idea provides them energy; mental force and confidence which can remove frustration from their life. Hence, the *mahāvākya* works as a medicine so that the psychological disorders can be removed without much effort. The import of the said *mahāvākya* leads us to maintain our life free from mental diseases or worldly diseases (*bhavaroga*). If there is disease; it must be properly diagnosed and treated. The *mahāvākya* provides a solace to the diseased persons who can easily overcome them and gather confidence for moving towards progress. This therapeutic utility or value of this *mahāvākya* can never be ignored.

The *mahāvākya*, ‘*Tattvamasi*’ entails identification between the individual self and Universal Self. The idea of identity develops a self-confidence in an individual in treating himself and other social human beings. If this import of *mahāvākya* is considered as a matter of *mantra* in one’s life, he will think himself as a part of Divinity and having Divine power in him, which removes bad qualities like meanness, cowardiceness, miserliness (*kārpāṇya*), self- centredness etc. Under such situation he thinks himself not only great but also think other human beings as having equally divine, because they are also the part of the same divinity. If it is so, he can not neglect or hate others, resulting in removal of social evils like hatred, exploitation, untouchability, violence, sexual harassment, bride-burning, witch –killing, woman trafficking etc, if we ponder on this *mantra*, it can change the whole world by way of changing an individual’s attitude towards the phenomenal world and other human beings. The realization of this *mahāvākya* works in two ways: mental development of an individual and considering other persons as most

honourable. It may return to us the import of the symbolic stage as found in the *Vedic* age in more technologically and scientifically developed as endorsed by Śrī Aurobindo. The consideration of each human being and his action as the symbol of the divine had brought a spiritual equality among all beings and all natural phenomena. Such symbolic stage Śrī Aurobindo, thinks would come back in a better manner through the change of human being's attitude towards himself and either human being. Such divinization starts with this *mahāvākya*, which has socio-religion value.

In the said *mahāvākya*, the identity between 'Tat' and 'tvam' has been brought 'Tat' stands any person, Super Being, or Super Power, as it is a pronoun. One might take the advantage of its flexibility and say that an individual being, *Brahman*, teacher or *guru*, an ideal man or any ideal source of inspiration. Indian soil is the land of divinity and hence one may have belief that he is identified with divine being or with his teacher or preceptor. One might think that his teacher or *guru* is identified with him (*gururevasākṣāt Brahman*). Those who are non-belivers in such religious matter may feel their identification with their favourite man, favourite hero or some ideal persons. Whatever may be case an individual gathers confidence through his identification with some one whom he regards or considers superior to him. We do not find a man in this world who does not have any loyalty to an individual who is considered superior or respectable to him. That is why; 'Tat' may stand for any Superior Man, but not God alone. Moreover, sometimes our scriptures like *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Gītā*, *Bible*, *Korān* or *Tripitaka* etc. may be considered as a source of inspiration to someone and hence he is loyal to the scriptures and inspired by them. The soldiers feel identity with their motherland. In this case also 'Tat' stands for motherland and 'tvam' indicates a soldier. For this reason, the *mahāvākya* has both religious and secular value.

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## **Index**

### **A**

<i>adhikaraṇa</i>	19, 26,27,39
<i>adhikarī</i>	39
<i>adhyasta</i>	4
<i>aharṅkāra</i>	44
<i>ajñāna</i>	18
<i>akhaṇḍārthavākya</i>	72,73
<i>angī</i>	9, 59
<i>anirvacanīya</i>	26
<i>antaryāmin</i>	41,105
<i>apṛthakasiddhi</i>	9,113
<i>arthavāda</i>	57,58,59,60
<i>Auḍulomi</i>	27, 28
<i>avidyā</i>	31,91

### **B**

<i>Bādhva</i>	22
<i>bhāgalakṣaṇā</i>	9, 83,84, 87,88
<i>bhāvārtha</i>	21
<i>Brahmasūtra</i>	2, 18, 19,63,109,126
<i>brāhmaṇas</i>	14, 15, 16

### **C**

<i>caitanya</i>	3, 32, 60
-----------------	-----------

### **D**

<i>Dayānanda</i>	14,146
<i>deśapariçceda</i>	23

E	
esoteric	2
F	
falsity	25, 107
G	
<i>gods</i>	15, 16, 45
<i>guru</i>	15,43 ,95
<i>golokdham</i>	123
H	
<i>Hiraṇyagarbha</i>	14, 15, 16,42,44
<i>hymns</i>	15, 16, 41
I	
<i>Ihāmutraphalabhogavirāga</i>	4
<i>Īśvara</i>	15, 30, 31, 32, 41, 44,82, 83,85,86,108
J	
<i>Jagat/jagat</i>	3, 21, 22, 24
K	
<i>Kalpataru</i>	17
<i>kālaparicceda</i>	23
<i>kāraṇavācya</i>	14, 21
<i>Kalpataru</i>	17
<i>Kāśkṛtsna</i>	28
<i>Kūtasthacaitanya</i>	41
L	
<i>Lakṣṇā</i>	9,76,81,86,88,89,90,91,99,110,111
M	

<i>Maitreyī</i>	1
<i>manana</i>	7, 28, 94, 96,124
<i>mantra</i>	7,14, 15, 16
<i>Mantradraṣṭaḥ</i>	14
<i>māyā</i>	3, 26, 30, 31,150
<i>mithyā</i>	24, 25, 26
<i>mokṣa</i>	1, 2, 103
<i>mumukṣutvam</i>	4, 7
N	
<i>neti</i>	23
<i>nidhidyāsana</i>	7, 28, 88, 91, 93,94,96
<i>nyāgrodha</i>	48, 50,123
<i>Nyāyaprasthāna</i>	18
O	
omnipresent	23, 128, 129
omnipotent	128, 129
omniscient	27,42
ontological	2,25
P	
<i>Parimala</i>	17
<i>Pañcadaśī</i>	23, 30, 43, 45, 82,85, 89,92
Paul Deussen	10,141,143
Paul Hacker	140,142,143
<i>Prasthāntraya</i>	17,103,126
<i>Pratibimbabada</i>	31

## Q

Quiescence 22

## R

*Ṛṣi* 14, 23, 44,45

## S

*sadāsadvilakṣaṇa* 24, 26

*Sadsampatti* 4

*sāmānādhikaraṇya* 4, 73, 74, 75, 77,78,76, 105,106,110

*Sāyanācārya* 15

*Smṛtiprasthāna* 18

*śravaṇa* 7, 28, 91, 94,120,124

*Śruti* 2, 4, 15, 18, 23,53,63,91,92,111,115,119

## T

*tādātmya* 27

*trikālbādhita* 24

*titikṣā* 3, 6

## U

*uparati* 3,6

*upādhi* 32,37,39,113

*upāsanā* 59,60,61,62,92

*Uttarmīmāṃsā* 17,18, 39

## V

*Vācaspati* 28,88

*vaiṣṭanavagāhī* 8,98

*vākyārthavicāraṇā* 2,96

*Vedavyāsa* 39

<i>Vidyāraṇya</i>	23,30,46,91
<i>vikṣepaśakti</i>	26
<i>Vivaraṇa</i>	2, 3, 30,31, 91
W	
Wilhelm Halbfass	140
Y	
<i>Yājñabalkya</i>	1, 23